GSHR

# Gulf South Historical Review

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# From the Editor . . .

Summer cannot be far off as the Spring issue of the *Gulf South Historical Review* makes its way to you. This is an interesting issue since the two articles represent two very different kinds of history. The first, by Judkin Browning, explores the historiography of white unity in the South. It unravels the story of how successive generations of historians have explained the remarkable unity of purpose shown by whites in this region in the Civil War era. It is a fascinating, if complex, story, written well. Browning deals with a topic that is as potentially volatile as any in our region's history. To say the article is thought provoking is to engage in cliché, but it is an example of intellectual history at its best. Also, if you were looking for a topic to read further in, and a bibliography to work from, you need look no more.

Our second article is perfect for the summer, as Patrick Cosby takes us out to the ball game in Tampa. Baseball is an American game, and also an expression of Cuban nationalism. Where better to see this played out than in Ybor City, and where better to explore the racial and ethnic divisions, rivalries and conflicts as they were present in our world almost a century ago. Cosby puts the game in the larger context of the social realities of the day, and through his work we have an insight into the realities of life in those days. Both of these fine articles confront race and its role in our society. Although the authors are addressing different subjects, and writing very different kinds of history, we find that a common thread ties them together, as it does so much of our historical experience.

"From the Archives" features a letter from a class of Southerner rarely heard from, the poor white Reconstruction era Irishman. The letter, annotated by Elisa Baldwin, our Associate Editor, and followed by an excellent commentary on the Irish by Professor Mel McKiven, is a poignant testimony to the difficulty many Southerners faced after the war's end. Dr. McKiven has been exploring the Irish experience in Mobile and environs in this period and helps to better understand William Dowling and his world.

With all this and sixteen interesting book reviews, thanks to the unceasing work of our Book Review Editor, Professor Jim McSwain of Tuskegee University, it is little wonder this journal is called a review, isn't it?

This issue was done by Ms. Baldwin and our new Editorial Assistant, Margaret Istre, because I have been on sabbatical. They did a great deal of good work and certainly deserve our recognition and thanks. I worry that they found it easier to do the issue with my being gone....

Mark your calendars for the next meeting of the Gulf South Historical Association. It will be October 6-10, 2004, at the Hilton Garden Inn on Pensacola Beach. This is a new hotel, near where we have met before, on one of the world's most beautiful beaches. I hope we will see you there. In the meantime, enjoy the summer, and read some history!

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**Cover Photo:** *Tampa Street Car, ca. 1933.* Burgert Brothers Photograph Collection, Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library.

*Roderick MacKenzie's sketch of antebellum planters for the Capitol Rotunda in Montgomery, Alabama.* Erik Overbey Collection, University of South Alabama Archives.

# Foundations of Sand: Evaluating the Historical Assessments of White Unity in the Antebellum South

Judkin Browning

When the eleven future Confederate states seceded from the Union between December 1860 and May 1861, white Southerners from every rung on the economic and social ladder united to join in armed conflict against a common enemy, in what nearly everyone assumed would be a brief war. The war lasted far longer than anticipated and would both reveal, and in some cases exacerbate, significant fissures within white society. But in May 1861, after Lincoln's call for troops pushed reluctant Upper South states over the brink of secession, an undeniable unity existed among white Southerners as they enlisted in local regiments in order to serve in the new Confederate army. Though they may have joined for a variety of different reasons, and may have united only against what they perceived as northern aggression, nonslaveholders and planters alike flocked to the southern banner.

For decades, historians have debated whether there was a deeper set of shared beliefs between planters and nonslaveholders (yeomen and poor whites), and more specifically what was the foundation for this white unity. The preponderance of scholarly works that focus on yeomen in the last twenty years, from Steven Hahn's *The Roots of Southern Populism* (1983) to Allan Kulikoff's forthcoming *The Making of the American Yeomen Class,* demonstrates that interest in the social, cultural, economic, and political interaction between elites and non-elites is more fervid now than it has ever been. Since the end of the Civil War, scholars have presented a variety of conflicting factors for this unity—from planter dominance, advocated by late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century historians, to economic democracy, cultural hegemony, shared racial antagonisms, and gendered power constructs promulgated by more contemporary historians such as Frank L. Owsley, Eugene Genovese, George Fredrickson, and Stephanie McCurry, respectively. Through a variety of historical paradigms since World War II, scholars have found successively different ways of viewing the foundations of southern unity, with each interpretation predicated to some extent on the scholar's presentist and political agenda.

But how do we classify white attitudes in a South that was not homogeneous? And more importantly for this whole unity debate, who

was a yeoman? Scholars have disagreed on both questions, but especially the latter. The definitions of yeomen among scholars vary greatly. In this historiographical exploration, we shall weave our way through the diverse arguments, and find that the various and different ways scholars define "yeomen" influence their conclusions, and that perhaps the strongest word comes ultimately not from a historian, but from a perceptive pre-World War II journalist, who keenly understood the nebulous southern white "mind" and the white man's fixation on white supremacy as the central element in his identity. For all the disparate rationales offered for white unity, race is the strongest paradigm that transcends southern geographical regions, linking white men into a tenuous unity throughout the antebellum South.

Frank Lawrence Owsley brought yeomen to the forefront of antebellum southern society in 1949 in his *Plain Folk in the Old South.* Up to that point, most scholars had identified planters as the dominate presence in antebellum southern society, with nary a yeoman to be seen or reckoned with. In the 1860s Frederick Law Olmsted had advanced the notion that the South was divided into three economic and social categories—planters, poor whites, and slaves.[1] Often planter power rested on a foundation that did not represent the republican ideals of the region. Shortly before the Civil War, Hinton Rowan Helper in *The Impending Crisis of the South* (1857) had contended that planters deliberately defrauded lower class whites with the slavery issue in order to maintain their power base. William B. Hesseltine perpetuated the putative principle that planters dominated their less affluent brethren, arguing that slaveholders created the proslavery argument not to combat external threats from abolitionists, but to maintain unity inside their region by "substituting the sense of racial superiority for the mounting class consciousness of the nonslaveholders."[2] Roger Shugg, in a Marxist study of Louisiana published just ten years before Owsley's *Plain Folk,* argued, "the absence of overt class hostility was at bottom the result of slavery and the plantation system. The former put the burden of labor on the Negro and made his race as odious as its bondage....Race prejudice, in other words, filled the void of class hatred."[3] This sort of planter dominance suggests that white unity existed largely through coercion or artifice. Frank Owsley would have none of that.

In *Plain Folk of the Old South,* Owsley sought to shift the power balance in antebellum southern society from oligarchic, self-interested planters to egalitarian, democratic yeomen. Owsley introduced the yeomen as the powerful engine of society, emphasized the minority status of planters, and practically excluded slavery from the equation

altogether. He portrayed the white South as a highly democratic region, united across class lines, and comfortable in their economic and social roles. Owsley's argument that the middle-class yeomen represented the foundation of antebellum southern society was not altogether revolutionary. Eleven years earlier, William B. Hesseltine had divided the antebellum South into six social classes, identifying the yeomen as "the backbone of Southern society," because a large majority produced both cash and subsistence crops.[4] What separated Hesseltine's earlier argument from Owsley's later one was the former's limited definition of yeomanry and overall lack of vigor. Hesseltine accepted the fact that there was a major gap between yeomen and a large number of poor whites, whom he characterized as "frequently degenerate," "irreligious," and "immoral" folk who "eked out a miserable existence upon the poorest submarginalized lands of the South."[5] Owsley greatly expanded the definition of yeomen to practically subsume the poor whites, and made his argument of plain folk as "the backbone of Southern society" with a fury unmatched before or since.

Owsley's interpretation must be viewed in the context in which it emerged. *Plain Folk* was more than just a new way of viewing the Old South. It was a defense against what Owsley perceived as the South's many enemies. He had become so frustrated with disparaging "Yankee" views of the white South that he became admittedly "very deliberately provocative" in its defense.[6] Owsley made his first foray into sectional defense in "The Irrepressible Conflict," his essay in the agrarian manifesto *I'll Take My Stand* (1930). He argued that the industrial North, with its "doctrine of intolerance, crusading, standardizing alike in industry and in life," forced the Civil War on the agrarian South. Due to its rejection of high tariffs and federal aid for internal improvements, "the South had to be crushed out...it impeded the progress of the machine."[7] By 1933, Owsley had become even more enraged by what he perceived as a Yankee distortion of the South and her values. He wrote to a friend, "I am bitter to the marrow, clear through the marrow. So bitter that I feel I am losing my poise as a historian."[8] In his 1940 address to the Southern Historical Association, Owsley averred that abolitionists and their industrial cohorts had threatened "the existence of the South as seriously as the Nazis threaten the existence of England," and further argued that "their [abolitionists'] language was so violent, obscene, and insulting that not even Dr. Goebbels in all his flights has seldom equaled and never surpassed it."[9]

Channeling his energy into something more academic, Owsley began working diligently on his *magnum opus*. The Walter L. Fleming lectures at Louisiana State University provided a forum for Owsley to recast the historical view of southern society by examining the historical roots of antebellum social reality. In that reality, Owsley did not see what W. J. Cash had seen in *The Mind of the South* (1941). According to Cash the planter class had controlled antebellum southern society, concerning themselves with their own interests, which were often at odds with non-slaveholders, and in effect constructed invisible walls around the common whites.[10] Planter self interests left slaveless yeomen to "wax fat in a sort of primitive prosperity," but kept them at that embryonic state, where they "were left more or less to stagnate at a level but a step or two above the pioneers."[11]

Rather than perceiving the South as Cash's planter-dominated society, Owsley saw a harmonious relationship between planters and a nearly all-encompassing middle class, tied to each other through a folk culture, political equality, and economic mobility. Challenging northern abolitionist critics, Owsley would have categorically denied that the racism of black slavery served as the primary unifying factor among southern whites. He implicitly rejected the abolitionist argument against the immorality and brutality of slavery by ignoring slavery altogether, thereby relegating it to an insignificant role in the greater scheme of southern society. And contrary to Cash's thesis, Owsley believed that the sturdy yeomen he exalted in *Plain Folk* persevered and rescued the South from the North's destructive influence during the war and Reconstruction. Ironically, at a time when southern white land-ownership was at a record low, Owsley brought forth his thesis that the saviors of the South were the resilient yeomen landowners.[12] In 1940 he asserted, "today, the black belt of Alabama and of the entire lower South has 70 to 80 percent landless farmers, a good portion of whom are whites. Before 1860 the reverse situation prevailed."[13]

Owsley sought to regenerate the Jeffersonian ideal of a nation of yeomen farmers practicing an egalitarian brand of republicanism. Undoubtedly Jefferson would have been shocked by the expansive definition of yeomanry under which Owsley operated. Owsley defined his ubiquitous "plain folk" yeomen as those outside the plantation economy, including "small slaveholding farmers; the nonslaveholders who owned the land which [*sic*] they cultivated; the numerous herdsmen on the frontier, pine barrens, and mountains; and the tenant farmers whose agricultural production, as recorded in the census, indicated thrift, energy, and self-respect." Owsley even had room for

"landless renters, squatters, farm laborers, and a 'leisure class' whose means of support does not appear on the record."[14]

In Owsley's vision of the Old South, planters and yeomen lived in mutually supportive harmony. He painted an idyllic portrait of self-sufficient, industrious, God-fearing, hardy folk with few tensions in their lives. All interactions between planters and yeomen appeared in a positive light, including only the happy times of church services, house raisings, logrollings, corn shuckings, and other cooperative farm gatherings. The economic democracy that undergirded this planter-yeoman alliance rested on a solid foundation of yeomen self-sufficiency. By practicing "safety-first" agriculture—raising enough foodstuffs to supply one's family, and selling surplus in the market—Owsley believed that whites of any economic status had the opportunity to advance economically, and as a result, socially.[15]

Yet Owsley was perhaps a bit too romantic in his view of the South as a land of self-sufficient farm folk. J. William Harris found that Augusta, Georgia, though surrounded by an extensive agricultural hinterland, experienced such a shortage of corn and pork that the items had to be imported from the Upper South and Northwest.[16] Lacy K. Ford demonstrated that while a substantial majority of South Carolina upcountry yeomen with extensive improved landholdings were self-sufficient, "nearly 40 percent of all farms with fewer than fifty improved acres were not self-sufficient" by 1850. Instead, many small farmers raised cotton as a cash crop to the neglect of their foodstuffs, and much of the resulting profit went not into land and slaves—the preferred investment strategy of planters—but into a local market of foodstuffs provided by planters and larger farmers.[17] Such a conclusion suggests that definite gradations existed with the landholding yeomanry.

Intent on establishing the existence of a dynamic middle class yeomanry, Owsley bristled at the "illiterate and ignorant" poor whites depicted by Frederick Law Olmsted and even scholars such as Paul H. Buck, who described them as "a class of lazy, idle men who gained a universal reputation for shiftlessness."[18] Whereas contemporary travelers (and later historians) believed they saw indolent, destitute agriculturalists, Owsley argued that these simple folk were primarily livestock herders whose livestock, off grazing in the open range woods, remained out of view. According to Owsley, they were self-sufficient yeomen living on the "inner frontier," not "the most degraded race of human beings claiming an Anglo-Saxon origin that can be found on the face of the earth," as the contemporary, but hardly sympathetic observer, Fanny Kemble decried.[19] Kemble's pronouncement would

*Hog drive in western North Carolina.* State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C.

have struck raw nerves with Forrest McDonald and Grady McWhiney who defended Owsley's interpretation in a 1975 article.[20] First, these supposed poor whites were actually a yeomen class of "professional drovers," and furthermore, of course, they were not Anglo-Saxon, but *Celtic*.[21] But whether these livestock owners were Anglo-Saxon or Celtic (and many probably did not know or care themselves), they were most certainly not simply shiftless and destitute poor whites in the eyes of Owsley and his supporters.[22]

In his view of antebellum white society, Owsley perceived economic gradations along a vertical continuum, with mobility up or down the scale. In his calculations, the gap in wealth between the planters and yeomen narrowed substantially in the 1850s, (while ironically, slave prices increased drastically). Unlike Roger Shugg, who had argued in *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana* (1939), that for Louisiana at least, class stratification was based on the ownership of slaves, Owsley concluded that land ownership provided a better method of identifying class mobility—the implicit assumption being that an expanded ownership of land would translate into an expanded ownership of slaves if a landowner desired.[23] Examining census records, Owsley looked at the total percentage of landownership among farmers in both 1850 and 1860, and saw that the percentages were higher for the latter year. Hence, he determined landownership had increased; in other words, many of those individuals who had not owned land in 1850 did own land in 1860. He showed that total landownership among farmers increased in Montgomery County, Alabama, from 72 percent to 76 percent; in Marengo County from 75 percent to 87 percent; and Greene County went from 53 percent in 1837 to 81 percent by 1860. But Owsley looked at aggregate numbers, rather than specific families to determine whether their personal situation had actually changed. As one scholar has pointed out, migration was so heavy that these numbers meant nothing by themselves; they must be placed in context. For instance, in Harrison County, Mississippi, 113 out of 166 farmers owned land in 1850, for a total of 68 percent. In 1860, 81 percent owned land, but the numeric data shows only 83 out of 102 farmers owning land. This demonstrates massive migration, not necessarily advancing yeomen.[24]

Yet in Owsley's interpretation, every white member of society had the opportunity for advancement. Inertia resulted more from individual choice than from an institutional oppression by the South's political economy. While it was "a common occurrence" for a member of the "rank and file" to become wealthy and enjoy political power,

*Mississippi River Boatmen.* Walter Blair and Franklin J. Meine, *Mike Fink* (New York, 1922), 44.

"relatively few of the plain folk...seem to have had a desire to become wealthy."[25] Thus, Owsley convinced himself that when the census records and tax lists showed that many whites had not progressed economically, they had done so by choice, and were not constrained by circumstances—hence economic democracy allowed for either advancement or voluntary stasis.

The assault on Owsley's economic democracy thesis began early. In a 1945 article, Fabian Linden argued that Owsley's definition of farmer (in an article that predated *Plain Folk*) was so narrow as to exclude a quarter of the South's free population, thereby weakening the strength of his statistical model. Owsley and his students excluded "hunters, woodcutters, fishermen, and laborers [who] formed the basal layers of the social pyramid," as well as carpenters, tanners, butchers, painters, well-diggers, and other artisans.[26] Linden argued that the inclusion of these excluded groups would undermine Owsley's argument, since "the factory worker or the store clerk were in some instances pressured to leave the land and to seek reluctantly support in urban centers." [27]

In 1977, Randolph B. Campbell and Richard G. Lowe published *Wealth and Power in Antebellum Texas,* an intensive examination of the eastern half of Texas in the decade before the Civil War, in which the authors uncovered a planter-dominated society with a rigid division of wealth, and economic gaps that were not narrowing as Owsley had claimed. According to Campbell and Lowe's quantitative analysis, 25 percent of Texas whites owned 85 percent of the state's wealth.[28] Economic historian Gavin Wright also challenged Owsley's conclusion that the wealth gap decreased in the 1850s. Wright found that fewer landowners owned slaves over the last thirty years of the antebellum South because price had outstripped the ability to buy, and nonslaveholding farmers were getting displaced from the slave market and the better lands.[29]

Similarly, Donald L. Winters explored Owsley's economic democracy in Tennessee, using much of the quantitative research compiled by Owsley's own students, and tried to split the difference between Owsley and his critics. After a complicated analysis of several economic arguments, quantitative tables, and Gini indexes, Winters asserted that the evidence revealed "that farm wealth was markedly more concentrated than Owsley contended."[30] Winters agreed with Owsley's critics, "Planter economic dominance rather than economic democracy characterized the antebellum South."[31] Yet, Winters also asserted that free whites did show very minor amounts of material gain,

arguing that their circumstances were more favorable than other scholars have admitted. In other words, Winters argued that Owsley overstated his case, but his basic interpretation was not totally inaccurate because it gave yeomen their proper due.

Owsley had pressed the economic democracy argument in order to prove the absence of class conflict in antebellum society. Though the plain folk were closely knit, Owsley averred that they were "not class conscious in the Marxian sense, for with rare exceptions they did not regard the planters and men of wealth as their oppressors."[32] Furthermore, Owsley implied that slavery did not debilitate lower class whites. Instead of resenting their more economically fortunate slaveholding brethren, the plain folk "admired them as a rule and looked with approval on their success."[33] Just "the knowledge that the economic door was not bolted against themselves and their children tended to stifle the development of a jealous and bitter class consciousness."[34] Yet as we have seen, others have argued that southern farmers did not entirely fit Owsley's ideal. Applying Owsley's quantitative techniques to the North, Gavin Wright demonstrated that, ironically, it was northern farmers who enjoyed the greater economic mobility and shared more common characteristics than Owsley's beloved southern plain folk. While "it is surely an exaggeration to describe the rural North as a homogeneous, egalitarian society of freeholding farmers," Wright argued, "that region was much closer to such an ideal than was the South." Was it possible that the antebellum North actually embodied Owsley's agrarian ideal better than his beloved Dixieland (where, of course, he and eleven others took their stand)? Perhaps Wright could hear the venerable sectionalist rolling over in his grave. To further disturb Owsley in his agitated slumber, Wright concluded wryly, "so much for economic democracy."[35]

In the 1960s, Eugene Genovese sought another perspective to explain white unity, for unlike Owsley he believed an economic democracy model was untenable, and that whites were indeed divided into classes "in the Marxian sense." While Owsley came from the right, offering a conservative defense of an agrarian way of life that would preserve the status quo, Genovese approached white unity from the left, seeking to overthrow the consensus historiographical tradition that America's capitalistic status was a good thing. Yet Genovese, though deviating in opinion on the economic mobility of Owsley's yeomen, did not fundamentally disagree with Owsley's premise that there was no class conflict between whites in the Old South. Whereas Owsley saw no class conflict because everyone perceived opportunities for

advancement, Genovese argued that class conflict did not exist because planter elites exercised hegemony over the rural proletariat.

A New Left historian in the 1960s, Genovese departed from the Old Left's traditional economic determinism in order to expand class analysis to include the political, social, cultural, and psychological bonds of a pre-capitalist society. Genovese admired the Old South precisely because it did not exhibit the evils associated with capitalism that pervaded the industrial North, and his own contemporary America. Like Charles Beard, he viewed antebellum society's march into the Civil War as a conflict between antithetical civilizations: the anti-capitalist or pre-capitalist class of planters against the capitalist elite of the North (Owsley had seen the key dichotomy being between agrarianism and industrialism, not pre-capitalism and capitalism). Thus, by describing and explaining antebellum southern society, Genovese sought to create a "usable past" for New Left historians, instructing modern society of the evils of capitalism, and the power of hegemony.

While mid-twentieth-century capitalism bred class resentment among lower class blacks, in the nineteenth century, the pre-capitalist paternalism of the planters had been an effective management system, serving to avoid open ruptures between whites, or between black slaves and their owners. In Genovese's arguments, the Old South had faults, but at least its society was predicated on sentiment, community, and intense personal relationships, not the sterile market-driven, unfeeling bourgeois capitalist society that conquered the South and dominated through the twentieth century. Though slaveholders' social and moral milieu "left something to be desired," "at least they were not dominated by capitalistic greed."[36]

Genovese ultimately was sympathetic to southern conservative elites (he lionized George Fitzhugh in the second part of *The World the Slaveholders Made),* and focused his work not on the yeomanry that Owsley exalted, but on the planters who dominated the social and economic apects of southern society.[37] Genovese viewed the South within a Marxian framework, but his terms were a combination of nineteenth-century German theorist G. W. F. Hegel, and Antonio Gramsci, a twentieth-century Italian Marxist who spent the last ten years of his life in an Italian prison (he died in 1936) trying to come to grips with how the masses allowed themselves to acquiesce in their own subjugation to a fascist power.[38] Utilizing Hegel's model, Genovese saw the primary dialectic as that between masters and slaves. Masters dominated, but were dependent on slaves for the psychological health and their economic prosperity. This master-slave dialectic

"bound two peoples together in bitter antagonism while creating an organic relationship so complex and ambivalent that neither could express the simplest human feelings without reference to the other."[39] Borrowing the concept of "hegemony" from Gramsci, Genovese viewed the antebellum world as one in which planters developed a worldview, in order to secure their own political, economic, and social supremacy, which all classes ultimately accepted without manifesting any overt conflict.

According to Genovese, hegemony was the crucial component of why no class antagonisms developed. As Richard King argued, "hegemony linked the classes by a common set of assumptions, values, and attitudes which masked class contradictions."[40] Genovese argued that planters maintained a cultural hegemony over lower-class whites by creating a core set of values rooted in paternalism and hierarchy, which justified entrenched economic and social positions. Lower-class whites might resent their "betters," but then they were also proud (or envious) of their success. Genovese saw no planter conspiracy to prevent class consciousness. Rather, hegemony meant that everyone in society understood and accepted that planter dominance was the natural order of things, and each accepted their roles in southern society.

Yet, Genovese's use of Gramsci excludes two major themes: race and the role of nonslaveholders in underwriting planter power. Clarence E. Walker concluded that by employing a biased, and at times willfully negligent, interpretation of Gramsci's theory, Genovese "obscured more than he revealed," and in fact, "has taken U. B. Phillips' paternalistic slave system and given it Marxian clothing."[41] Indeed, though he lamented Phillips' "blinding" racism, Genovese, in an introduction to the 1966 reprint of *American Negro Slavery* shared Phillips' focus on southern planters: "Phillips' concern with the small ruling class was altogether proper: that class dominated the economy, politics, and social life of the South; it imposed its visions and values on the humbler men in society; it in fact ruled more completely than many other ruling classes in modern times."[42] Genovese admitted "American slavery subordinated one race to another and thereby rendered its fundamental class relationships more complex and ambiguous; but they remained class relationships."[43] By making slavery "a system of class rule," Genovese was able to use hegemony to explain why class conflict never broke into open rupture—nonslaveholders and slaves accepted the fact and internalized the belief that planter rule was the natural order of things.[44]

In Genovese's interpretation nonslaveholders had little say about the world they lived in. He diminished their role in developing a proslavery ideology (probably based on shared racial antagonisms), and ignored the democratic aspect of politics, in which the rulers must have the consent of the ruled. As Richard J. Ellis contended, "Given this political reality (no less real than the master-slave relation), slaveholders could not simply impose their preferred values on the larger society,"[45] they had to rely on their "lessers" to vote them into their preferred role of "betters." Some scholars contend that planters feared the nonslaveholder majorities. One South Carolina planter bewailed in 1859, "think you that 360,000 slaveholders will dictate terms for 3,000,000 of non-slaveholders at the South—I fear not. I mistrust our own people more than I fear all the efforts of the abolitionists."[46] But Genovese neglects these nonslaveholders who, in his hegemonic framework, underwrote their own second-tier status.

Through the logic of hegemony, Genovese was able to craft a static vision of the Old South where the ruling class generated a unique kind of paternalist society in order "to discipline and morally justify a system of exploitation" of slaves, but not other whites.[47] That paternalist animus "readily extended beyond the black-white relationship and impinged upon the relationship of rich to poorer white," displayed visibly in such acts as the planter throwing the annual big barbecue for the community, or aiding their neighbors in times of distress.[48] This smacks of Owsley's description of elite interactions with plain folks almost exclusively as positive, festive occasions of corn shuckings, log rollings, and barbecues. Owsley saw these depictions from the yeoman point of view, while Genovese concentrated more on the planter point of view, but both came to the same conclusion—whites generally lived in harmonious accord in the antebellum South. Though perhaps nonslaveholders did not remain in lower-class status voluntarily, as Owsley implies, Genovese does see them as quite comfortable with social, political, and economic condition. By so carefully constructing a world that explains why lower-class whites did not revolt, Genovese ultimately reinforces Owsley's contention that lower-class whites were content with their situation in the antebellum South.

Though, ironically, the Marxist Genovese found whites at ease in the antebellum South, other scholars have seen significant disparities between the classes, which led to class resentment. Bill Cecil-Fronsman, in *Common Whites: Class and Culture in Antebellum North Carolina* (1992), detected that the lower-class whites were not content, but not

yet angry or savvy enough to revolt against the elites. Cecil-Fronsman perceived a shared folk culture—a culture imbued with both egalitarian individualism and a strong sense of community—between yeomen and poor whites, separate from that of planters. The author explores what he considers a central "paradox" of southern history—the fact that "common whites boldly asserted their independence and self-worth" and "insisted that they were as good as anyone else" even while "they lived in a society that made it plain that they were not." While affirming that common whites constantly challenged planter exploitation on an individual level—over land, trade, or even marriage prospects—Cecil-Fronsman concludes that the planter's hegemony preempted "the process that might have translated common white resentments into a sense of class consciousness strong enough to promote a direct confrontation with slaveholders."[49]

More recent scholarship also suggests that white unity was always tenuous, as lower-class whites resented being restricted from any real economic or social advancement in southern society. Charles Bolton, in *Poor Whites of the Antebellum South* (1994), one of the first significant efforts to take a comprehensive look at the social, political and economic lives of poor whites, examined the landless white tenants and laborers of the North Carolina Piedmont and Northeastern Mississippi. Bolton discovered that unlike landowning yeomen, these poor whites suffered from much more instability and dislocation (in their need to find employment) as well as a "massively fragmented family life."[50] Bolton documented that the landless whites could constitute a significant minority in a region, as much as 40 percent of the free population in Piedmont North Carolina in 1860.[51] Furthermore, poor whites were geographically mobile, but not economically, as they moved frequently but failed to improve their financial prospects. As a result, "the migration of landless whites merely moved poverty west."[52]

For Bolton unequal wealth was not a matter of individual choice, but rather a result of severe class stratification. That stratification resulted from the twin evils usually associated only with the postbellum South, "the commercialization of agriculture and an oppressive credit system." The former restricted the availability of cheap land on the frontier for landless whites, as state and federal laws designed by and for commercial planters set the price per acre too high for those with limited means, and effectively ended "squatting" as a viable practice; the latter kept landless whites in an endless cycle of debt, usually working for other whites.[53] In fact, Bolton argued, "poor whites and

enslaved blacks represented the backbone of the antebellum South's work force."[54] Yet, for all their commonalities and interactions, which often extended to trade, social gatherings, and occasionally amorous relationships, poor whites did not join slaves or free blacks against the landed gentry. A variety of factors, primarily "white racism, kinship ties, religion, education, and mobility," Bolton concluded, "helped keep racial barriers high enough" to prevent any such class alliance against elites, despite latent class antagonisms.[55]

Fred A. Bailey analyzed hundreds of Confederate veteran questionnaires from the Middle Tennessee area to further demonstrate that class animosity existed prior to the war.[56] Though these findings must be used with caution—for it is not unreasonable for a bitter veteran of economic hardships in the late-nineteenth century to project his hardships back a few decades—they suggest that not all was harmony. One soldier challenged the notion of kinship ties alleviating some class differences, as suggested to varying degrees by Cash, Owsley, and Genovese, stating that those "who o[w]ned negros did not love to associate with" non-slaveowners, and slaveowning "kinsfolk did not mingle" with their slaveless relatives.[57] Bailey concluded that the Tennessee veterans felt constrained within class boundaries in which "few poor possessed the ability or the good fortune to advance; and few among the wealthy possessed the misfortune to descend from their station in life."[58] Economic inequality fed into social inequality and created palpable tensions within southern society.

Wartime exacerbated those tensions. Stephen V. Ash, in an earlier article and in his book, *When the Yankees Came* (1995), saw similar class conflict develop between poor whites and elites in the occupied South during the Civil War. Disdaining of their lower-class neighbors who seemed too readily to assist the Yankees, Ash argued that elites' "republican ethos ascribed to holder of property not only the independence necessary for good citizenship, but also superior qualities of character; those without property, it was alleged, were by their very nature venal and without honor."[59] When federal soldiers occupied Confederate territory, many of those "venal" poor whites united with their occupiers to take advantage of the elites. As a Union soldier serving in Virginia observed, "the poor ones are very bitter against the [wealthy or aristocratic class]; [they] charge them with bringing on the war, and are always willing to show where the rich ones have hid their grain, fodder, horses, &c. Many of them tell me it is a great satisfaction to them to see us help ourselves from the rich stores of their neighbors."[60]

However, the poor whites eventually abandoned their opposition to elites in order to unite against a familiar common enemy—recently freed slaves. And slaves were not singled out because of their class status, but because of the shared racial antagonisms and fears of a majority of white Southerners, slaveholders and nonslaveholders alike. Ash concluded, "Racism not only drove a wedge between the white and black lower classes (to the disadvantage of both), it also bound upper and lower-class whites in a Procrustean unity."[61]

In 1971, George Fredrickson articulated the Old South creed in which whites focused their racial fears into a political ideology. Contesting Genovese's cultural hegemony theory and Owsley's egalitarian economic democracy alliance, Fredrickson, incorporating a sociological perspective, utilized the phrase "herrenvolk democracy" in his renowned work, *The Black Image in the White Mind,* to describe the concept of a democracy for white men predicated on the subjugation of blacks.[62] But Fredrickson's exploration of the "white mind" borrowed much, if unobtrusively and more cerebrally, from a relic of a by-gone era, W. J. Cash's *The Mind of the South* (1941).

Long before Fredrickson, Cash had recognized the sheer power of the "black image" on the "white mind." Cash asserted, "if the plantation had introduced distinctions of wealth and rank" among Southerners who were originally cut from the same stock, and "had perhaps offended against the ego of the common white, it had also, you will remember, introduced that other vastly ego-warming and ego-expanding distinction between the white man and the black."[63] Cash stated that the reliance on black inferiority as the foundation of white equality "elevated this common white to a position comparable to that of, say, the Doric knight of ancient Sparta"—Cash's famous "proto-Dorian convention," which, in the words of James C. Cobb, "bound all whites, regardless of class, in a common, overriding commitment to white supremacy."[64] Because common whites did not see the "invisible walls" the plantation society had constructed around them because of this racial elevation, Cash concluded, "the old basic feeling of democracy was preserved practically intact."[65] A democracy for whites only—hence a "herrenvolk democracy."

Though Cash has fallen out of favor with a majority of scholars, Cobb persuasively argues that Cash's concept of a Proto-Dorian bond remains timeless. "For all the evidence presented in recent years of complexity and tension within the social structure of southern white society," Cobb declares, "there is no denying that in developing the concept of the Proto-Dorian bond, Cash identified a remarkably potent

and durable vehicle for social control."[66] Fredrickson had merely invoked an already proven formula.

But Fredrickson offered an alternative to Genovese's cultural hegemony model when it came to explicating the mechanisms of republicanism. Republicanism in Genovese's paternalist world was different from republicanism in a herrenvolk world. Paternalism saw gifted planter elite making the decisions for "the rabble"—elected as a sort of "father of the people." While herrenvolk democracy meant that the leaders had to appeal to their constituents as equals, in effect acting as "friends of the people." Richard Ellis gives the most succinct and incisive summation of the divergent views between Genovese and Fredrickson: "Whereas paternalists praised slavery for creating a governing class with the leisure necessary to undergo training essential to wise political leadership, Herrenvolk proponents lauded slavery for insuring the political, civic, social, and psychological equality among citizens upon which democracy depended."[67] Owsley would have agreed more with Fredrickson's version, simply because it implied equality among whites, rather than planter dominance, yet he would have had serious problems with the implicit idea that the racism of slavery had anything to do with white unity.[68]

However, the presence of black slaves influenced any sort of white alliance. Contemporary editor J. D. B. DeBow elucidated the advantages of herrenvolk democracy claiming, "no white man at the South serves another as a body servant, to clean his boots, wait on his table, and perform the menial services of the household. [Each white man] is a companion and an equal."[69] The implication was that if any whites were to feel that they were being treated in such a dependent way, the cherished white unity could be compromised. Alliances took on political ramifications as well, revealing potential strains of disunity. Lacy Ford documented a case in which South Carolina Upcountry planter Andrew Baxter Springs discovered that a lower-class white family was collaborating with Springs's slaves to steal corn and meat from the planter. His father advised Springs not to press charges against the whites because of the potential backlash it would generate, eroding the political support of the local yeoman majority, who elected elites like Springs into office.[70]

This fear of disunity demonstrates that whatever unity existed was tenuous and could not be taken for granted. White southern leaders would not have disagreed with U. B. Phillips' later claim that race was "the central theme of southern history," as they constantly cultivated concord with the common white folk by playing the race card. Planters

cast their defense of their slave interests "into suitably democratic terms," claiming that black slavery guaranteed white equality and democracy.[71] South Carolina Governor George McDuffie said in 1835, "Domestic slavery, therefore, instead of being a political evil, is the cornerstone of our republican edifice."[72] Georgia Democratic Senator Alfred Iverson wrote in July 1859, "slavery united all white men, from the wealthy planter to the laborer who had only the 'dignity of his color and race.'"[73] Such unity was even more important in the late 1850s as the price of slaves effectively excluded yeomen from joining slaveholder ranks, unless they were bequeathed slaves through inheritance from slaveowning kin. For example, average slave prices in Georgia rose from $722 in 1845 to $1658 in 1860, while in Louisiana a prime field hand that could be purchased in New Orleans for $850 in 1830, cost between $1800 and $2200 in 1860.[74] Practically no amount of yeoman commodity market participation or "saving for a rainy day" could support the purchase of a slave at those prices. With such pronounced economic disparities apparent, the battle for white unity depended on having a common enemy, preferably an alien race. Such ideas were not new to the nineteenth century.

In *American Slavery, American Freedom* (1975), Edmund Morgan suggested that black slavery was crucial to the rise of ideas of republican liberty in the South as early as the seventeenth century. Morgan demonstrated that the concept of using an alien race to deflect resentment between classes first emerged during Bacon's Rebellion in 1676 in Virginia when Nathaniel Bacon united lower class men by turning their hatred toward the Indians. But as Morgan declared, "For those with eyes to see, there was an obvious lesson in the rebellion. Resentment of an alien race might be more powerful than resentment of an upper class."[75] Southern planters soon recognized that "by lumping Indians, mulattoes, and Negroes in a single pariah class," they could "pave the way for a similar lumping of small and large planters in a single master class."[76] Thus Bacon's Rebellion sparked the unity that led to Cash's "proto-Dorian convention" as well as Fredrickson's "herrenvolk democracy," in which a shared republican and racial heritage united planters and plain folk into a semblance of equality.

Slavery became the foundation for the virtuous republican farmer in many regions of the South throughout the antebellum period. J. William Harris, in his study of Augusta, Georgia, and its hinterland counties, found that the Piedmont farmers largely staked their hopes on the commercial value of cotton.[77] Slavery promoted stability by ensuring that the most dependent were excluded from government,

preventing conflicts between labor and capital, which in turn prevented the necessity of a stronger government to deal with those conflicts: "Racially based slavery, therefore, guaranteed white liberty," without the danger of anarchy. Yet, Harris demonstrated that this unity was not secure enough to suit the planters. They feared lower-class whites allying with slaves over shared sentiments. An informal underworld network of relationships between poor whites and blacks existed in which they traded, stole, shielded runaways, and had sexual relations together. Slaveholders also feared that poor whites' racial antagonisms might turn into antipathy against those who owned blacks. Consequently, planters constantly reaffirmed the benefits of being a white man in a slave society in both deed and rhetoric.[78] William J. Cooper, Jr. buttressed Harris's argument in his engaging *Liberty and Slavery* (1983), arguing that, "aware and independent minded, the yeomen were not obsequious ciphers who blindly followed wherever the lordly planters led," but rather recognized that planter ascendancy "remained secure only so long as the mass of southern landowners and voters supported it"—which they did right up to the Civil War.[79]

Lacy K. Ford enhanced this interpretation with his exploration of the South Carolina upcountry in *The Origins of Southern Radicalism* (1991). In analyzing why yeomen eventually supported secession even though it seemed to go against their class interests, Ford asserted, "a unified South Carolina could secede because the dominant ideal in her society was not the planter ideal or the slaveholding ideal, but the old 'country-republican' ideal of personal independence, given peculiar fortification by the use of black slaves as a mud-sill class." Ford concluded, "Yeoman rose with planter to defend this ideal because it was not merely the planter's ideal, but his as well."[80] Like Harris, Ford uncovered a society in which "slavery strengthened republican values by enhancing the 'independence' of whites and creating a pervasive sense of equality among all whites, since all whites could claim membership in a privileged class simply on the basis of race."[81] The arguments presented by Harris, Cooper, Fredrickson and Ford differ significantly from those of Owsley, who understood white southern unity to be rooted in landownership and economic mobility, not skin color, but they echoed strongly the strains of Cash's "proto-Dorian convention" from fifty years prior.

However, not all recent scholars see the heavy racial influence in planter-yeomen unity that Fredrickson and the others saw, nor the yeomen middle-class ascendancy that Owsley envisioned. By using

gender as a category of analysis, Stephanie McCurry, in her book, *Masters of Small Worlds* (1995), argued that planters and yeomen in the South Carolina lowcountry unified over the common oppression of all dependents within the household, not just those with black skin—"as freemen in a world of dependents [yeomen and planters] shared...in a definition of manhood rooted in the inviolability of the household, the command of dependents, and the public prerogatives manhood conferred."[82] McCurry, like Ford, sought to understand why both classes united in secession, when it appeared to contradict their class interests to do so. She concluded that the common bond developed out of patriarchal prerogatives, which confirmed each white man's position in society as one who wields power over his own domain, led to unity on the most radical political issue of 1860. "When they struck for independence in 1860," McCurry argued, "lowcountry yeoman farmers acted in defense of their own identity, as masters of small worlds."[83] In an indirect way, McCurry revived Genovese's cultural hegemony theory through the use of gender—the shared values of a patriarchal and paternalistic mindset among all white men masked economic and social inequalities between planters and yeomen. Other scholars have suggested that elite women reinforced this mindset. Because "women of both races could, and did, sympathize with one another and try to minimize the daily indignities of slavery," Marli Weiner, in *Mistresses and Slaves: Plantation Women in South Carolina, 1830-1880* (1998), argues that white women reinforced the patriarchal, paternalistic society depicted by Genovese and McCurry by adhering to their culture's behavioral expectations. "Men created paternalism as a mechanism of social control; women put it into practice by their efforts to fulfill the expectations of the ideology of domesticity. By thus ameliorating some of the physical and emotional hardships experienced by slaves, women were the inadvertent agents of paternalism."[84]

McCurry contends, "Social inequality was not comfortably confined between black and white and limited to the private sphere, as those who define slave society primarily in terms of race would argue."[85] In an earlier article, she follows this same sentence with the conclusion (though she later removed it from her book), "White society in the slave South was not a "herrenvolk" or racial "democracy," to use George Fredrickson's much-adopted term, that bound white, mostly propertied men in relations of rough equality."[86] Instead, McCurry, like Genovese, views slavery as a class-based system, not a racial one. By concentrating on the exploitation of workers and dependents, and

analyzing those who controlled the means of production, McCurry downplays the racial aspect of white motivations.

McCurry overreaches when she asserts that the South Carolina Lowcountry represents just a "dramatic" example of such class relations that took place throughout the slaveholding South. She writes only of propertied yeomen, owning up to 150 improved acres. What of those who did not legally own property, such as poor whites, white laborers, tenants, and even black men? By McCurry's logic all these could claim a measure of equality with planters by acting as the *paterfamilias* in their own home. But male-dominated households were not a peculiarly southern phenomenon. As for southern nonslaveholders, they could not look at a planter and see an equal simply because both were married and had a roof and four walls—dress, speech, education, and hygiene often would be far too different to engender such sentiments. Rhetorically, one probably could not redress perceived grievances with the claim, "Don't treat me like I'm an unpropertied, dependent-less bachelor." The phrase "Don't treat me like I'm a nigger," however, held enormous cultural capital, and was one that any white of any economic level would have to acknowledge, regardless of all other circumstances. There is little need for a rigid class line when a rigid color line exists—as American history has repeatedly demonstrated, whites will relegate blacks into the lowest strata whenever possible, and such was the case in the antebellum South.

Yet McCurry's book does force scholars to address more deeply the concept of republicanism in the Old South. While some scholars see liberal capitalism as the key ideology of the Old South, McCurry, like Harris, and Ford, is firmly committed to the ideology of republicanism in the Old South.[87] By focusing on the political relations "*within* yeoman households," McCurry offers a fresh and unique way of analyzing the republican framework that relied on interaction between planter elites and their yeoman constituents.[88] McCurry leaves no doubt that if scholars want to comprehend the public sphere of southern political thought, they will have to understand the private sphere politics that served as the forge for the polished steel of republican ideology. Though it may fall slightly short of "compel[ling] a quite different interpretation of republicanism in the antebellum South from the one that currently prevails," it does present another new direction for Old South scholarship.[89]

Timothy Lockley also offers a new direction in his study of the Georgia lowcountry, *Lines in the Sand* (2001). Lockley examines the

day-to-day interactions between nonslaveholding whites and blacks, finding a host of casual relations, in which they trade, work, drink, go to church, and have sex together. Lockley asserts that such interactions reveal that race was just a "line in the sand" that was easily and often crossed, implying that class relationships were more important than race. However, in his conclusion, Lockley weakens his own analysis by admitting, "the fact that racial barriers existed and had the force of law behind them permitted nonslaveholders to circumvent them without actually threatening the social order of the lowcountry."[90] In other words, whites could have daily interaction with blacks without substantially threatening the dominance of white supremacy. Robert Olwell astutely surmises that because these racial-interaction laws were rarely enforced, "the intent was in actuality little more than ideological housekeeping—drawing a clear line between what they were willing to tolerate by custom and what they would not concede by law."[91] Olwell further makes a valid point that such crossing of the racial lines might be a one-way street and not mutually encouraged: "Might poor whites' desire to trespass the color line have been motivated by a desire to enjoy the privileges race gave them?"[92]

Lockley and McCurry's works are instructive on two important issues that are significant for the debate over white unity. First, how does one classify attitudes in a South that was not homogeneous, and more importantly for the concept of white unity, how does one define "yeoman"? Let's tackle the latter question first, given the wide diversity of definitions we have encountered. Owsley's definition of yeoman was the most expansive—ranging anywhere from tenants and landless renters to landowners with ten slaves. The only operating function for Owsley was that they were outside the plantation economy. In effect, his refusal to accept the concept of a "poor white" led him to consider all white non-elites to be yeomen. Steven Hahn and Lacy Ford considered yeomen to be landowners who may have possessed as many as five slaves. McCurry specified that yeomen, or "self-working farmers" were men who owned fewer than 150 acres of improved land, and fewer than ten slaves.[93] With such seemingly arbitrary definitions of a yeoman, it is no wonder scholars have a hard time finding common ground for explaining white unity.

So just who were these yeomen, and how were they united with southern elites? Owsley began the conversation in 1949 by trying to assert the dominance of an overwhelming yeomanry in the antebellum South. Through thrift, industriousness, republican values, folk culture, and economic democracy, the majority of yeomen, Owsley maintained,

were equal to, and united with the minority planters. Genovese argued that planters utterly dominated yeomen through non-economic forces. But the South lacked the homogeneity that Owsley and Genovese have tried to impose upon it. As Gavin Wright argued, "the 'planter dominance' and 'economic democracy' hypotheses still find advocates, for the good reason that each one reflects real features of antebellum Southern society."[94] Similarly, Mark Smith, in his slim volume documenting the historiography of slavery in Old South studies, concurs that yeomen appeared to demonstrate both "precommercial and market-oriented characteristics," depending on their geographical location, clouding Owsley's conception of a unified plain folk.[95] Indeed, the concepts of "plain folk" and yeomen will continue to be defined by the parameters each individual author needs to fit his or her evidentiary sources. Ultimately, the most important result of Owsley's extensive quantitative research is that he forced historians to reckon with the Old South's large group of middling whites, who stood between the very rich and the very poor.

Scholars who examine specific communities or geographic regions within the South encounter difficulties in extracting larger truths about antebellum power structures. As William Freehling adeptly argues, there was no "monolithic" South, but rather "various Souths."[96] However, the one overriding conviction that all southern white men shared—be it in mountain, lowcountry, upcountry, or black belt regions—was the firm belief in the supremacy of the white race over the black. There were undercurrents of disunity throughout the heterogeneous antebellum South, yet those undercurrents did not breach the surface of society on a large scale until drawn forth by the strains of war. A fragile, yet recognizable unity between elite and lower-class whites dominated the majority of the region. That tenuous concord rested its strongest and most enduring foundation not on economic democracy, though there were areas where fluidity existed; not on cultural hegemony, though strains of that strengthened planter power in some areas; and not on patriarchal proclivities, though undoubtedly gendered power relationships strengthened concepts of white masculinity; but on the presence of a large mass of propertyless African Americans as a foundation of white liberty.

No matter how hard some may try, historians can never get far from the issue of race as a palpable unifier among the majority of whites in the South. W. J. Cash, though not a professional historian, perceived a truth greater than any amount of quantitative data, coefficient ratios, Gini indexes, Marxist theories, or gendered analyses

can demonstrate. Much as William Faulkner captured the mindset of the backward-looking, ancestrally-haunted South in *Requiem for a Nun* when he had Gavin Stevens utter the words, "the past is never dead. It's not even past," so too did Cash capture the essence of racial antagonism with his concept of the "proto-Dorian convention."[97] The "white man's burden" of superiority inevitably dictated political, economic, social, and cultural roles in antebellum southern society. Plain folk or elite, the majority of white citizens—couching their defenses of slavery in terms of civilization and a providential enterprise ordained by God—derived their self-worth and belief in personal liberty by comparing themselves with those African Americans who were expected to feel neither. Yet, the Lord was not devoid of a sense of irony. As the God-fearing antebellum white Southerners discovered, a civilization based upon black slavery was like the biblical parable of the man who built his house upon sand—when "the rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house"—a tempest analogous to the Civil War—"it fell with a great crash."[98]

Of course, some lessons were hard to learn, as southern whites quickly rebuilt their postwar house on the shifting sands of white supremacy, and the unstable structure stood for another one hundred years. In addition to a sense of adventure, patriotism, self-defense, or a variety of personal motives for enlistment, an implicit reason Southerners joined the Confederacy was the white supremacist ideals it held out to all white men. As Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens said, "Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite idea of 'human equality'; its foundations are laid, its corner-stone rests upon the great truth, that the Negro is not equal to the white man, that slavery—subordination to the superior race—is his natural and normal condition."[99] The Confederacy promised all white men that they were part of the aristocracy. It offered them the proto-Dorian bond, ironically, at a time when many planters wanted to reduce the role of nonslaveholders in upholding that government by placing property and wealth qualifications on the vote. Planters could not exclude nonslaveholders from their republican freedoms because they needed the lower class to fill out the Confederate army rolls. Yet after the Civil War, lower-class whites maintained their fidelity to white supremacy, and, ironically, ultimately underwrote their own politically and economically marginal status.

# Notes

[1] Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey in the Back Country* (New York, 1863), 237, 297-99, passim. Judkin Browning would like to thank James Cobb for his always insightful comments and constant encouragement throughout the lifespan of this article.

[2] Hinton Rowan Helper, *The Impending Crisis of the South: How to Meet it*, ed. George Frederickson (1857; reprint, Cambridge, MA, 1968); William B. Hesseltine, "Some New Aspects of the Proslavery Argument," *Journal of Negro History* 21 (January 1936): 9-10. Both works are cited in J. William Harris, *Plain Folk and Gentry in a Slave Society: White Liberty and Black Slavery in Augusta's Hinterlands* (Scranton, PA, 1985), xv.

[3] Roger W. Shugg, *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana: A Social History of White Farmers and Laborers during Slavery and After, 1840-1875* (Baton Rouge, 1939), 30.

[4] In fact, Hesseltine even anticipated Owsley's economic democracy argument when he argued that yeomen united with the planter class primarily because of "the ease by which a man might rise from the yeomanry to the ranks of the aristocracy." William B. Hesseltine, *A History of the South, 1607-1936* (New York, 1938), 323.

[5] Hesseltine, *History of the South*, 324-25.

[6] Frank L. Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South*, Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures in Southern History, with a foreword by Grady McWhiney (1949; reprint, Baton Rouge, 1982), xv.

[7] Frank L. Owsley, "The Irrepressible Conflict," in *I'll Take My Stand; the South and the Agrarian Tradition, by Twelve Southerners* (1930; reprint, Baton Rouge, 1962), 69, 91. Fred A. Bailey analyzes Owsley's sectional defense, dividing his efforts into three intellectual phases, in Fred A. Bailey, "*Plain Folk* and Apology: Frank L. Owsley's Defense of the South," *Perspectives on the American South* (1987) 4: 101-15.

[8] Owsley quote found in Fred A. Bailey, "*Plain Folk* and Apology," 103. To another friend he wrote, "My only comment on all this internal chaos is that Stonewall Jackson or Bedford Forrest should have seized control and become a Napoleon or a Mussolini and thereby saved the South from 70 years of peonage at the hands of the God damn Yankees." Ibid., 104.

[9] Edward S. Shapiro, "Frank L. Owsley and the Defense of Southern Identity," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 36 (Spring 1977): 82.

[10] W.J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York, 1941), 22, 39.

[11] Ibid., 23.

[12] For more on Owsley's agrarian-republican rationale behind his work, see W. Kirk Wood, "Before Republicanism: Frank Lawrence Owsley and the Search for Southern Identity, 1865-1965," *Southern Studies* 6 (Winter 1995): 65-74; and Edward S. Shapiro, "The American Agrarian-Distributists of the 1930s," *Canadian Review of American Studies* 27, no. 2 (1997): 71-102.

[13] Frank L. and Harriet C. Owsley, "The Economic Basis of Society in the Late Ante-bellum South," *Journal of Southern History* 6 (February 1940): 31.

[14] Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South*, 7-8.

[15] Ibid., 96-116.

[16] Harris, *Plain Folk and Gentry*, 25-27.

[17] Lacy K. Ford, "Self-Sufficiency, Cotton, and Economic Development in the South Carolina Upcountry, 1800-1860," *Journal of Economic History* 45 (June 1985): 265-66 (quote on p. 265). Ford's article argued that agricultural reformers feared that the short-staple cotton boom would lead many farmers to neglect their foodstuff production in the hopes of cashing in big with cotton. A lack of self-sufficiency would be lead to a lack of independence, which would present a serious challenge to republicanism. Therefore, "agricultural reformers transformed the drudgery of subsistence to a moral duty of republican citizens." Ford, " Self-Sufficiency, Cotton, and Economic Development," 264.

[18] Paul H. Buck, "The Poor Whites of the Ante-Bellum South," *American Historical Review* 31, no. 1 (1925): 43.

[19] Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South*, 34-38; Kemble quoted in Hesseline, *History of the South*, 325. Even Eugene Genovese took a dim view of poor whites when he opened Part Two of his monumental *Roll Jordan, Roll* with the sardonic comment, "It goes without saying that 'niggers are lazy': the planters always said so, as did the 'poor white trash,' whose own famous commitment to hard and steady work doubtless assured their entrance into John Calvin's Kingdon of Heaven." See Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York, 1972), 285.

[20] Forrest McDonald and Grady McWhiney, "The Antebellum Southern Herdsman: A Reinterpretation," *The Journal of Southern History* 41 (May, 1975): 147-66. McWhiney and MacDonald argue that even Owsley misunderstood the fact that some livestock herders were not just in that occupation as a stepping stone toward becoming a farmer, but rather there was a class of drovers who herded livestock as their permanent occupation. However, this is not to suggest that the authors have any serious problems with most of Owsley's arguments. See Grady McWhiney's effusive and glowing introduction to the 1982 reprint of *Plain Folk*.

[21] McDonald and McWhiney, "The Antebellum Southern Herdsman," 156-60. The publications by McWhiney and MacDonald on variations of the Celtic theme are too numerous to list, numbering in the multiple dozens. However, works that persuasively challenge their theses include Maldwyn A. Jones, "The Scotch-Irish in British America," in *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire*, ed. Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan (Chapel Hill, 1991), 284-313; Rowland Berthoff, "Celtic Myst over the South," *Journal of Southern History* 52 (November 1986): 523-46; Charles Joyner, *Shared Traditions: Southern History and Folk Culture* (Urbana, 1999).

[22] For a deeper examination and critique of Owsley's non-"poor white" plain folk's marginal soil agricultural practices, see John Solomon Otto, "Southern "Plain Folk" Agriculture: A Reconsideration," *Plantation Society in the Americas* 2 (April 1983): 29-36. As Eugene Genovese concludes, the mere presence of cattle in census records did not imply marketability. For a critique of the viability of open-

range herders, see Eugene D. Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy & Society of the Slave South* (New York, 1967), 107. J. Crawford King Jr. argues that many planters wanted the open range closed because they were suffering loss in land, labor and timber, yet they legally did not close the range down throughout most of the South until after the war, implying that the yeomen were able to hold planter power in check in certain key areas. See J. Crawford King Jr., "The Closing of the Southern Range: An Exploratory Study," *Journal of Southern History* 48 (February 1982): 53-70.

[23] Shugg argued that the ownership of slaves was a better indicator of class than ownership of land, concluding that sixty percent of slaveholders in Louisiana owned less than ten slaves. In this way, he identified the poor, white nonslaveholding people (he rejected the term "poor whites" as having a negative stigma) as the proletariat who, after years of subjugation to oligarchic planters and "redeemer" race-baiting and corruption, finally revolted against their bourgeois oppressors in the Populist crusades of the late-nineteenth century. See Shugg, *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana*, 20-22, 26-27, 274-76, 313.

[24] Fabian Linden, "Economic Democracy in the Slave South: An Appraisal of Some Recent Views," *Journal of Negro History* 31 (April 1946): 180. Linden challenged Frank L. Owsley's 1940s articles in which he first outlined his yeoman-dominated Old South. See Owsley, "The Economic Basis of Society in the Late Ante-bellum South," 24-45; Frank L. and Harriet C. Owsley, "The Economic Structure of Rural Tennessee, 1850-1860," *Journal of Southern History* 8 (May, 1942): 161-82.

[25] Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South*, 134.

[26] Linden, "Economic Democracy in the Slave South, 144-45.

[27] Ibid., 145-46.

[28] Randolph B. Campbell, "Planters and Plain Folk: Harrison County, Texas, as a test case, 1850-1860," *Journal of Southern History* 40 (August, 1974): 369-98; Randolph B. Campbell and Richard G. Lowe, *Wealth and Power in Antebellum Texas*, (College Station, TX, 1977).

[29] Gavin Wright, *The Political Economy of the Cotton South: Households, Markets, and Wealth in the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1978), 34. This concept of rising slave prices "squeezing out" nonslaveholders was not new to the nineteenth century. Allan Kulikoff argued that the pattern began in eighteenth-century Tidewater Virginia and Maryland. When yeomen feared exclusion from tidewater land they moved to the piedmont of middle and southside Virginia, where land was plentiful and cheap. But eventually the pattern repeated itself as population density increased, and more acres were improved. Nonslaveholders then moved to the frontier of Tennessee and Kentucky, taking their social system with them. Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill, 1986), 161.

[30] Donald Winters, "'Plain Folk' of the Old South Reexamined: Economic Democracy in Tennessee," *The Journal of Southern History* 53 (November 1987): 585.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South*, 133.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid., 133-34.

[35] Wright, *Political Economy of the Cotton South*, 39.

[36] My discussion for Genovese has been informed by on my own readings of four of his books, *The Political Economy of Slavery* (1966), *The World the Slaveholders Made* (1969), *In Red and Black: Marxian Explorations in Southern and Afro-American History* (1972), and *Roll, Jordan, Roll* (1974); as well as Richard King, "Marxism and the Slave South," *American Quarterly* 29 (Spring 1977): 117-31; Peter W. Bardoglio, "Power and Ideology in the Slave South: Eugene Genovese and his Critics," *Maryland Historian* 12 (Fall 1981): 23-37; Herbert Shapiro, "Eugene Genovese, Marxism, and the Study of Slavery," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 9 (Winter 1982): 87-100; and Richard William Evans, "In Quest of a Useable Past: Young Leftist Historians in the 1960s" (Ph.D. diss., Case Western Reserve University, 1979), especially pages 174-225. Quote is found in Kenneth S. Lynn, "The Regressive Historians," *American Scholar* 47(Fall 1978): 495.

[37] Genovese once wrote of the *Cannibals All* author, "I have come to think of him as an old friend. As my affection and admiration deepened, the task of rescuing him from detractors became something of a private mission."As Kenneth Lynn points out, though, the irony is that the anti-capitalist Genovese exalted Fitzhugh, who was employed to write his proslavery tract by the South's most energetic proponent of capitalistic expansion, J. D. B. DeBow. Lynn, "The Regressive Historians," 495-96 (quote on p. 496).

[38] See Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. and trans. Quinton Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York, 1972).

[39] Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 3.

[40] King, "Marxism and the Slave South," 118.

[41] Clarence E. Walker, "Massa's New Clothes: A Critique of Eugene D. Genovese on Southern Society, Master-Slave Relations, and Slave Behavior," *Umoja* 2 (Summer 1980): 115.

[42] Ulrich Bonnell Phillips, *American Negro Slavery: A Survey of the Supply, Employment and Control of Negro Labor as Determined by the Plantation Regime*, with an introduction by Eugene D. Genovese (1918; reprint, Baton Rouge, 1966), xiv.

[43] Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 3; Walker, "Massa's New Clothes," 120-21.

[44] Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 3; Walker, "Massa's New Clothes," 115.

[45] Richard T. Ellis, "Legitimating Slavery in the Old South: The Effect of Political Institutions on Ideology," *Studies in American Political Development* 5 (Fall 1991): 341.

[46] Michael P. Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic: the Secession of Georgia* (Baton Rouge, 1977), 87. In this study of Georgia's secession movement, Johnson argues that in Georgia "it was not the electorate but something very close to Genovese's ruling class that led the state out of the Union. Secession was the ultimate test of the hegemony of the slaveholders. Yet secession was necessary precisely because the hegemony of the slaveholders was not secure." (Quote on p. *xx*).

[47] Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 4.

[48] Ibid., 92.

[49] Bill Cecil-Fronsman, *Common Whites: Class and Culture in Antebellum North Carolina* (Lexington, 1992), 39, 31, 8. For more on the shared egalitarian culture of common whites see especially chapters two and four.

[50] Charles C. Bolton, *Poor Whites of the Antebellum South: Tenants and Laborers in Central North Carolina and Northeast Mississippi*, (Durham, NC, 1994), 8-9. Some scholars have studied poor whites in the postbellum South. See Wayne J. Flynt, *Dixie's Forgotten People: The South's Poor Whites* (Bloomington, IN, 1979); and I.A. Newby, *Plain Folk in the New South: Social Changes and Cultural Persistence, 1880-1915* (Baton Rouge, 1989).

[51] Ibid., 12.

[52] Ibid., 83.

[53] Ibid., 15, 72-74, 92-94.

[54] Ibid., 44.

[55] Ibid., 9. For more on black and white interactions, both positive and negative ones, see chapter 3. For an excellent, brief discussion of the effects of poor white poverty and resentment, see Scott Culclasure, "'I have Killed a Damned Dog': Poor White Murder in the Old South," *North Carolina Historical Review* 70 (January, 1993): 14-39; and for a longer treatment see Edward Isham, *The Confessions of Edward Isham: a Poor White Life of the Old South*, ed. Charles C. Bolton and Scott P. Culclasure, with an introduction by J. William Harris (Athens, GA, 1998).

[56] Fred A. Bailey, "The Poor, Plain Folk, and Planters: A Social Analysis of Middle Tennessee Respondents to the Civil War Veterans' Questionnaires," *West Tennessee Historical Society Papers* 36 (October 1982): 5-24. Bailey utilized the CWVQ resource to produce six articles and a book, which are all variations of the same theme. The only article that uses the CWVQ to offer a dissenting view from Bailey is Jennifer K. Boone, "'Mingling Freely': Tennessee Society on the Eve of the Civil War," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 51(Fall 1992): 137-46.

[57] Bailey, "The Poor, Plain Folk, and Planters," 5.

[58] Ibid., 21.

[59] Stephen V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1995), 184.

[60] Stephen V. Ash, "Poor Whites in the Occupied South, 1861-1865," *Journal of Southern History* 57 (February 1991): 48.

[61] Ash, "Poor Whites in the Occupied South," 59.

[62] George Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914* (New York, 1971), 61. Fredrickson borrowed the phrase from Pierre L. van den Berghe. See Pierre L. van den Berghe, *Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective* (New York, 1967).

[63] Cash, *Mind of the South,* 38.

[64] James C. Cobb, "Does Mind No Longer Matter? The South, the Nation, and *The Mind of the South,* 1941-1991," *Journal of Southern History* 57 (Fall 1991): 681.

[65] Cash, *Mind of the South,* 39.

[66] Cobb, "Does Mind No Longer Matter," 699.

[67] Ellis, "Legitimating slavery," 344. I borrow my terms "father of the people" and "friends of the people" from Alan Taylor's differentiation between Federalists and Republicans in the Federal period in New York. See Alan Taylor, *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York, 1995), 141, 256.

[68] For an illuminating look at the reverse of Fredrickson's concept—how blacks viewed whites—see Mia Bay, *The White Image in the Black Mind: African-American Ideas about White People, 1830-1925* (New York, 2000).

[69] Ellis, "Legitimating Slavery," 343.

[70] Lacy K. Ford, *The Origins of Southern Radicalism: the South Carolina Upcountry, 1800-1860* (New York, 1991), 67.

[71] Johnson, *Toward a Patriarchal Republic,* 90.

[72] Harris, *Plain Folk and Gentry in a Slave Society,* 9.

[73] Iverson speech in *Columbus Times,* July 20, 1859, quoted in Frederick Beck Gates, "Building the 'Empire State of the South': Political Economy in Georgia, 1800-1860" (Ph.D. diss., University of Georgia), 250.

[74] Gates, "Building the 'Empire State of the South,'" 206-7; Shugg, *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana,* 86-87.

[75] Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York, 1975), 269-70.

[76] Ibid., 386.

[77] In contrast to Harris's view of a commercially-oriented yeomanry, Steven Hahn found a yeomanry in the North Georgia hill country unencumbered by the slavocracy or "the hegemony of the marketplace." Plantation and nonplantation societies coexisted because of an adherence to a republican ideology that granted

all landowners rights to the land and their own means of production. The Georgia upcountry yeomen chose to participate primarily in a local market and opted for the safety of diversified agriculture rather than risk the international cotton market. Hahn cautiously concluded that yeomen supported the war as a way to defend their independence as producers, yet such independence, and concomitant freedom from white dependence, relied on the preservation of black slavery. See Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890* (New York, 1983), 87-90, 280-82 (quote on p. 282).

[78] Harris, *Plain Folk and Gentry*, 21-37, quote on p. 6.

[79] In his largely political analysis, Cooper revealed that slavery unified white southerners and focused their political attention on subjects that supported rather than challenged slavery—agrarian versus industrial benefits, tariff duties, and the importance of territorial expansion as an economic and social palliative for slavery. See William J. Cooper, Jr., *Liberty and Slavery: Southern Politics to 1860* (New York, 1983), 248 (quote).

[80] Ford, *Origins of Southern Radicalism*, 372.

[81] Ibid., 353.

[82] Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Lowcountry* (New York, 1995), 278.

[83] Ibid., 304.

[84] Marli Weiner, *Mistresses and Slaves: Plantation Women in South Carolina, 1830-1880* (Urbana, 1998), 52, 88.

[85] Ibid., 237.

[86] McCurry, "The Two Faces of Republicanism: Gender and Proslavery Politics in Antebellum South Carolina," *The Journal of American History* 78 (March 1992): 1247.

[87] For the classic explanation of this liberal view, see James Oakes, *The Ruling Race: A History of American Slaveholders* (New York, 1982).

[88] McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds*, viii (italics are added).

[89] Ibid., 238. For a top-down approach of South Carolina radicals that challenges the "republican school" of southern historians, see Manisha Sinha, *The Counterrevolution of Slavery: Politics and Ideology in Antebellum South Carolina* (Chapel Hill, 2000). For an examination of women's economic roles in republicanism, see *Neither Lady Nor Slave: Working Women of the Old South*, edited by Susanna Delfino and Michele Gillespie (Chapel Hill, 2002).

[90] Timothy Lockley, *Lines in the Sand: Race and Class in Lowcountry Georgia, 1750-1860* (Athens, 2001), 165.

[91] Robert Olwell, review of *Lines in the Sand: Race and Class in Lowcountry Georgia, 1750-1860*, in *William and Mary Quarterly* 59 (January 2002): 304.

[92] Olwell, review, 304. For an exploration of similar themes of conflating race and class in colonial times, see Kirsten Fischer, *Suspect Relations: Sex, Race, and Resistance in Colonial North Carolina* (Ithaca, NY, 2002).

[93] McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds*, 50.

[94] Wright, *Political Economy of the Cotton South*, 10. For an elaboration of this "paradox," as Wright describes it, see Wright, *Political Economy of the Cotton South*, 10-42.

[95] Mark M. Smith, *Debating Slavery: Economy and Society in the Antebellum American South*, New Studies in Economic and Social History, (Cambridge, 1998). Smith devotes a chapter to "Yeomen and Nonslaveholders" in which he conducts a comprehensive study of the literature.

[96] William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion: Secessionists at Bay, 1789-1854* (New York, 1990), vii-ix.

[97] William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun*, Act I, Scene III.

[98] Matthew 7: 27, NIV (New International Version).

[99] Don H. Doyle, *Nations Divided: America, Italy, and the Southern Question*, Jack N. and Addie D. Averitt Lecture Series, no. 10 (Athens, GA, 2002), 81.

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# "Worth Going Miles to Witness": Baseball and Identity in Ybor City, Florida

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On March 10,1920, the Washington Senators prepared to open their spring training season against Tampa's Class-D minor league team, the Tampa Smokers. Baseball fans were "'all hopped up' with a lot of pep" as they arranged their schedules and made plans to "journey over to Plant Field and sit in the grandstand, eat peanuts, drink—whoa, Coca-Cola, Chero-Cola, etc., to [their] hearts' content and [to] cuss the umpires." Fifty-five cents, including a war tax, purchased a general admissions ticket, eighty-five cents bought a seat in the grandstand, and $1.10 purchased the privilege "to grab a seat in the box row."[1]

Four days earlier, Alfredo Montoto, a baseball promoter and the sports writer for the Ybor City newspaper *La Prensa*, traveled to Havana, Cuba, on a mission to bring back a team of "famous Cuban stars" to play against the major league team from Washington. The Senators had scheduled to play six games from March 15-20, 1920, against the Cuban team in a series that "promise[d] to draw a record attendance for baseball in [the] city."[2] Promoters and journalists expected the games against the Cuban team to fill the stadium to its capacity and even recommended that fans purchase tickets in advance to secure reserved seats since the available seating would be "taxed" by "local Cubans [who were] all lovers of the game."[3]

The Cuba team included several players who had played professionally in the United States in either the Major Leagues or on professional Negro League teams. Right-fielder Rafael Almeida had been one of the first two Cubans to play in the Major Leagues during the twentieth century when he signed to play for the Cincinnati Reds in 1911. Center-fielder Jacinto "Jack" Calvo and pitcher José Acosta had formerly played for the Washington Senators, and would actually rejoin that squad for the 1920 season, while also playing in the Negro Leagues for the Long Beach Cubans and the New Jersey Cubans. Additionally, Herrera, the Cuban left-fielder, was "well remembered in Tampa for his performances in the city league with Ybor City."[4]

Ybor City, the cigar-manufacturing center near Tampa, Florida, has often served as a boundary or border between North Americans and various working-class immigrant groups. Spanish, Italian, and especially Cuban workers followed the cigar industry to Ybor City in the late nineteenth century and subsequently encountered North

*Tampa Smokers, ca. 1924.* Burgert Brothers Photograph Collectrion, Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library.

American people, institutions, and cultural expressions, including the sport of baseball. Scholars of American history have often viewed baseball as an expression of American culture that helped erode ethnic identities during the early-twentieth century as immigrant workers assimilated American values and understandings. In Ybor City, however, players from a variety of backgrounds graced the local baseball diamonds. As demonstrated by the series between the Washington Senators and the team from Cuba in March 1920, local stars often played against top-notch players from the United States and Cuba, even sharing the field with Cubans of African descent despite Jim Crow segregation. In the cultural borderland of Ybor City, immigrant cigar workers, drawing on eclectic influences, infused the game of baseball with values and meanings that reflected their own understandings and defined their own unique sense of identity.

In multi-ethnic urban centers, like Ybor City, cultural expressions such as the game of baseball often reflected shifting social identities. In Ybor City, Cuban immigrants encountered non-Hispanic North Americans, as well as other immigrant workers, but they brought with them a strong sense of national identity that some nationalists linked to the baseball heritage that had blossomed in Cuba during the late-nineteenth century. Cubans brought their own symbols and understandings of baseball with them when they migrated to United States. Subsequently, the meanings that developed around the game in Ybor City became infused with Cuban influences.

Baseball came to Cuba in the mid-nineteenth century, during a period of unrest on the island as Cubans nationalists initiated wars for independence from Spain. The Ten Year's War exploded in 1868 with the Grito de Yara, and the struggle for Cuba Libre would continue until 1898. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, a vision of Cuban national identity evolved. Cuban nationalists, such as José Martí, articulated a sense Cuban nationalism that incorporated former slaves of African descent, who had been freed only in 1886 and who had participated with valor during the wars for independence, into a vision for the future of the Cuban people. As the nineteenth century progressed, the game of baseball became one of the primary vehicles for expressing such a national identity and for uniting all Cubans, despite racial, class, and even gendered divisions, into the "imagined community" of Cuban nationhood.

Tradition credits Nemesio Guilló, a middle-class Cuban student who had matriculated in the United States, with introducing baseball

to the island in 1864. All segments of Cuban society soon embraced the game with enthusiasm. Upper class Cubans dominated the amateur club teams in the major cities, while lower class tobacco and sugar mill workers played on professional or semi-professional teams. By the 1890s, all Cubans were playing the same sport. Cuban nationalists, seeking to define a cohesive sense of Cuban identity, viewed the game as a cultural expression that could incorporate all of Cuban society. To Cuban nationalists, baseball offered the possibility of integrating all Cubans in a national vision by appealing to a shared cultural understanding of baseball. Nationalists envisioned a Cuban identity based on the values of modernity, teamwork, and democracy that baseball embodied. Baseball became "a metaphor for the people Cubans wished to become."[5]

That the game came from foreign origins was less important than the fact that Cubans themselves chose to play baseball simply because the game was not Spanish. Cubans used baseball to create cultural space for themselves by contrasting the sport with the traditional Spanish pastime of bullfighting. In 1887, the Cuban poet and philosopher Enrique Jose Varona contrasted the two recreations, claiming that baseball "induces...a valuable element of physical regeneration and moral progress." By contrast, bullfighting would "have pernicious effects on any people," since those "who become accustomed to seeing blood, spill it easily." Wenceslao Gálvez y Delmonte, a nineteenth-century writer and baseball player, wrote that "baseball is an enlightened spectacle and the bullfight is a barbaric spectacle."[6]

Though middle-class Cuban nationalists could use a shared experience with baseball to bridge some of the cultural gaps among different segments of Cuban society, they also needed to articulate a vision that could overcome the deepest social divisions. Racial divisions exacerbated economic fissures to create a Cuban society sharply divided between people of European and African descent. Nationalist writers evoked the images of the Afro-Cuban soldiers, exemplified by General Antonio Maceo, who had distinguished themselves during early wars of independence, to envision a Cuban identity that could overcome racially inspired fear and oppression.

José Martí claimed that "[a] Cuban is more than mulatto, black or white." The shared experiences of fighting for independence united all Cubans as "[d]ying for Cuba on the battlefield, the souls of both Negroes and white men have risen together."[7] In a famous speech, delivered at the Liceo Cubano in Ybor City, Florida on November 26,

1891, Martí encouraged cigar workers to support independence for all Cubans. He admonished those who subscribed to fears, promoted by Spanish authorities, that a war for Cuban independence would unleash a race war. "Must we be afraid," Martí asked, "of the Cuban who has suffered most from being deprived of his freedom in the country where the blood he shed for it has made him love it too much to be a threat to it?" For Martí, the movement for Cuban independence could only triumph "[w]ith all, and for the good of all."[8]

Baseball represented one cultural arena in which Afro-Cubans could achieve a measure of social and economic success without directly challenging Cuban power structures. During the 1880s, Afro-Cuban societies had organized several baseball teams. In Havana, Afro-Cubans founded the Universo Baseball Club, the Comercio Baseball Club, and Varón Baseball Club. Afro-Cubans also formed teams in other cities. The Fraternidad Baseball Club played in Guanabacoa and other teams formed in Matanzas and Cárdnenas.[9] Semi-professional sugar mill teams, however, offered Afro-Cubans the greatest access to social and economic mobility.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, the talented pitcher José Mendez, a "very dark Cuban" born in Cárdenas in 1888, achieved a level of fame throughout the island. An American player, Arthur W. Hardy, commented on Mendez's physique, saying that Mendez "had developed tremendous shoulders and biceps from chopping sugar cane." Had Mendez been lighter-skinned, John McGraw the manager of the New York Giants, would have been willing to offer Mendez a contract of $50,000 to play in United States, but the team trained in Texas and "McGraw understood the severity of segregation laws."[10]

Cubans expressed, partially through baseball, an emerging sense of national identity, with the promise of racial integration. When Cuban cigar workers followed the industry to Ybor City, they carried with them the game of baseball and the values that Cuban nationalists had articulated when comparing baseball to the Spanish pastime of bullfighting. Cuban cigar workers in Ybor City understood the symbolic links between baseball and Cuban nationhood and often supported baseball as a vehicle to fund movements for Cuban independence. Julian Gonzalez, a cigar worker who had migrated from Havana, edited a sports magazine in Ybor City, *La Pelota,* which used all proceeds to help finance José Martí's Partido Revolucionario Cubano (PRC).[11] Cuban baseball players quickly dominated the baseball scene in Ybor City, though they met Americans and other ethnic groups

in Tampa and Ybor City, and engaged in a cultural encounter, from which there would emerge a unique expression of their identity and their baseball community.

Having developed an affinity for baseball in Cuba, and established a baseball infrastructure in Ybor City that included competition with visiting Cuban teams as well as with American teams from Tampa, the Cuban cigar workers played a dominant role in Ybor City's early-twentieth-century baseball history. However, other ethnic groups, namely the Spanish and Italians, also migrated to Ybor City in the late 1880s and early 1890s. While they did not initially play baseball in large numbers, by the 1920s a second generation of immigrants increasingly became enthralled by the sport that captured the imagination of their Cuban neighbors. As the young boys of the various ethnic groups began playing baseball, the game no longer represented an expression of simply Cuban identities, but came to embody the aspirations and identities of the entire community. Cuban, Spanish, and Italian workers all began participating in an activity that the Cubans had established as an important expression of Ybor City's culture. Additionally, Americans outside of the community employed the constructed term, "Latin," to identify all of Ybor City's ethnic workers as a single social unit. Under such conditions, baseball in the 1920s reflected the early emergence of a community-wide identity.

Like the Cuban workers, many of the Spaniards in Ybor City followed the cigar industry to Florida's Gulf Coast in the late-nineteenth century. Many had come originally from the Spanish region of Asturias but had traveled to Cuba to find prosperous work in the cigar industry. By 1911, 7,500 Spaniards worked in Ybor City's cigar factories. Nearly 90 percent had migrated to Florida after first traveling to Cuba. A majority of the Spanish workers were unmarried adult men who lived in Ybor City's boardinghouses. Of the 7,500 Spanish workers, 85 percent were adult males, and only 350 had married and fathered children. Of those raising families in Ybor City, 250 had married either Cuban or Italian women, and the families of 100 men lived elsewhere.[12]

Unlike the Cubans and Spanish, the Italians who settled in Ybor City did not initially follow or participate in the early successes of the cigar industry. The nucleus of Ybor City's Italian community arrived in 1887, following an outburst of gang warfare in New Orleans. With the outbreak of violence many Italians lost their lives. Eleven were lynched in 1891.[13] Others, including three hundred people who fled by train to Mobile, Alabama, then by boat to Tampa, escaped and settled

in Ybor City.[14] Italians in Ybor City soon established the heart of their community around Seventh Avenue and Eighteenth Street, an area that remained the center of Ybor's "Little Italy," for the next seventy-five years.[15]

Upon the Italians' arrival in Ybor City, "[t]heir welcome proved anything but cordial." The established Cuban and Spanish cigar workers barred Italians from joining unions or learning the cigar makers' trade by working as apprentices. Italian workers therefore "accepted the rougher jobs...and for the next few years did the janitor work, swept the floors, carried water, tended doors, handled the bales of tobacco, and loaded and unloaded wagons." Italians also worked in areas that complemented the cigar industry, owning property and founding groceries, bakeries, and street cart vending businesses. In October 1909, for example, Italians received 102 licenses to operate street carts, while only two Cubans and eleven Spaniards received such licenses.[16]

Italians finally entered the cigar industry following an 1898 strike that essentially broke the monopoly the Cuban cigar makers' unions had maintained over the lower paying jobs. Italians had been learning the trade "at home each night with material that had been quietly appropriated during the day's work" as a janitor or floor sweeper in the cigar factories.[17] Though Cubans and Spaniards still dominated the more skilled positions, Italians gained a foothold in the industry by learning to produce the cheaper, lower quality cigars. By 1920, the *Tampa Daily Times* called for the recognition of the contributions that Italians had made to the area. Italians, claimed the newspaper, "have labored hard, abided by the laws of the state, and have more than made good." Additionally, the Italian community had "from time to time turned out doctors, lawyers, professors of arts and sciences, magistrates, etc."[18] By the 1920s, Italians, along with Cubans and Spaniards, had become an integral part of Ybor City's community and culture.

Though Cubans still dominated baseball in Ybor City during the 1920s, Spanish and Italian cigar makers and their children began developing an affinity for the game. Ybor City native and Hall-of-Fame baseball player, Al Lopez, whose parents were both Spanish, recalled how he first became interested in baseball during the 1920 World Series. As Cleveland and Brooklyn squared off, "so-and-so was rooting for this team and so-and-so was rooting for that team," while Lopez pulled for Cleveland, who eventually won the championship. "I think that kind of started me off, you know...," recalled Lopez.[19] As ethnic groups other than Cubans began playing baseball in the 1920s, the game served as a mirror to general changes in Ybor City society. Ethnicity

became contested terrain as various groups attempted to affirm their ethnic identities even as they were being redefined and a community-wide Latin identity began to emerge. Essentially, "community consciousness and Latin identity were malleable realities."[20]

Radios, which were rare before 1922, broadcast baseball games and other sporting events to Ybor City's ethnic population in increasing numbers throughout the 1920s. By 1931, radios replaced the *lectores* in the cigar factories following a prolonged labor strike.[21] The practice of employing a *lector,* or reader, had originated in Cuba. The cigar workers themselves paid the salaries for the *lectores* and selected the materials that would be read. Workers often chose Spanish language literature or radical labor publications.[22] When workers lost the privilege of hiring the *lectores* in 1931, factory owners replaced the readers with radios. The new media helped break down some of the insularity of ethnic identities.

In spite of the omnipresence of such American mass culture in the 1920s, Ybor City residents still maintained some strong connections to their individual ethnic communities as they often remained separated by the circumstances of daily life. In the cigar factories, different ethnic groups were divided by the socially determined division of labor and by the individualized nature of the cigar-rolling process. Workers of Spanish descent often occupied skilled positions, such as that of the selector who chose the tobacco leaves based on size and color, while Cubans and Italians meticulously stripped and rolled cigars by hand.[23] As recently as 1911, Spaniards had occupied the positions of selectors and pickers and packers in almost all of the factories, while Cubans and Italians had been "excluded from the selectors and pickers and packers' unions."[24] Additionally, each cigar maker was paid by the piece and likely kept his own interests in mind while on the factory floor, despite the solidarity shown during periods of labor organization and unrest.

The various ethnic groups also lived in different segments of Ybor City. Many Cubans lived between 12th Street and 16th Street. Italian families were scattered from 15th or 16th Street, "all the way up to 23rd Street." Additionally, the area behind the Columbia Restaurant, centered on 5th and 6th avenues, constituted a "little Italian village." The Spanish men, who were fewer in number and often resided in Ybor City without their families, usually lived in boardinghouses near the cigar factories from 12th Avenue to 16th or 18th Avenue. Neighborhood youths would occasionally have "a battle or a fight [among the various ethnic groups]," and "start throwing stones or

*Cigar Makers and Lector, ca. 1930.* Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library.

rocks at each other. One group against the other, but nothing vicious."[25]

At the heart of the ethnic communities were the mutual aid societies. Based on a tradition of voluntary social welfare associations, the mutual aid societies, or ethnic clubs, began as institutions offering members death and insurance benefits, but "grew into complex agencies of insurance, medical care, recreation, and culture."[26] For a small portion of a worker's wages, one received "medical care, hospitalization, financial aid until able to return to work, maternity care, medicines, financial aid in case the worker has to leave the city...and free burial services."[27] In Ybor City, the El Circulo Cubano served white Cubans while La Union Martí-Maceo functioned for the Afro-Cuban population. The Italians built L'Unione Italiana on Seventh Avenue in 1911 while the Spaniards had two clubs, El Centro Español and El Centro Asturiano.

Along with providing members state-of-the-art collective medical care and retirement pensions, the mutual aid societies became the focus of social life throughout Ybor City. For Tony Pizzo's generation the focus of life in Ybor City "was the Italian Club and the activities of the Italian Club," and "[i]t was the same with the Spanish Clubs and the Cuban Club." Dr. Ferdie Pacheco, an Ybor City native who later became the personal physician to boxing's Muhammad Ali, recalled that his life "from birth revolved around the Centro Español and the Centro Asturiano."[28]

While each mutual aid society affirmed ethnic identities, they also "provided a matrix within which" the various ethnic groups "further identified themselves as Latins."[29] The mutual aid societies connected all ethnic groups in Ybor City as they participated in activities and institutions that defined the Latin community. Additionally, ethnic groups intertwined as each attended the social and cultural functions presented by the other ethnic clubs. Tony Pizzo recalled how "people of different nationalities attended" picnics given by the clubs. Ferdie Pacheco remembered that Italians "came to our dances, [at the Centro Español] and integrated smoothly." Pacheco, however, never visited the Italian Club. Jokingly, he "blame[d] it on Benito Mussolini."[30]

With the passage of time, however, the ethnic divisions began to break down in Ybor society, despite some efforts to reaffirm ethnicity. The community's cultural expressions also reflected the shift from ethnic insulation to the construction of a community-wide Latin identity. Just as baseball had been important to a Cuban sense of national identity, by the 1920s the practices and meanings of the game came to reflect the inclusion of Italians and Spaniards along with

Cubans, in a Latin identity that was constructed as Ybor City residents participated in the same baseball institutions, cheered for Latin heroes, and competed against non-Latins from the greater Tampa community.

Just as various ethnic groups began to participate in a common social and professional life, people of various ethnicities increasingly played baseball together as the nature of Ybor City shifted during the 1920s and the game achieved widespread popularity. Whereas Cubans had once dominated the baseball culture, Italians and Spaniards became increasingly interested in baseball, even demanding that readers in the cigar factories, the *lectores,* read the daily sports news, until 1931 when the factory owners refused to allow the institution to operate.[31]

Prior to the 1920s Italians in Ybor City had shown little interest in playing baseball. Such a lack of interest could be observed as Italians were noticeably missing from the team representing the Italian club. Examination of the roster of a 1923 game reveals that Hispanic players dominated the lineup of the Italian team. Players with Hispanic surnames like Pérez, Domingo, and Alvarez played second base, first base, and right field, respectively. Many of the players came from Cuba, "because they didn't have enough Italian ballplayers."[32]

By the late 1920s, however, photographs of cigar factory teams increasingly displayed Italian players alongside their Hispanic counterparts. A photograph of the 1927 Ybor City League championship team revealed a number of Italian players. While clearly still minorities, Italians and Spaniards began to participate in Ybor City's baseball culture in greater numbers throughout the 1920s.[33]

Italians and Spaniards began playing more baseball for a number of reasons. Labor activity had declined following a general strike in 1919-1920, as material conditions improved during the boom years in the first part of the decade. Therefore, second-generation Italian and Spanish Ybor City youths possessed a greater degree of free time that they could devote to the game that had captured the imagination of their Cuban neighbors. Children of the various ethnic groups also learned baseball in the public schools.[34] Youth baseball received support from the Major Leagues, which advocated standardized dimensions for baseball diamonds in schools and playgrounds. Diamonds used by boys under the age of sixteen "are recommended to be 82 feet between the bases, instead of 90 feet; the pitching mound to be 50 feet from home base, instead of 60 feet 6 inches, and the ball to weigh four and one-half ounces, instead of five and one quarter."[35]

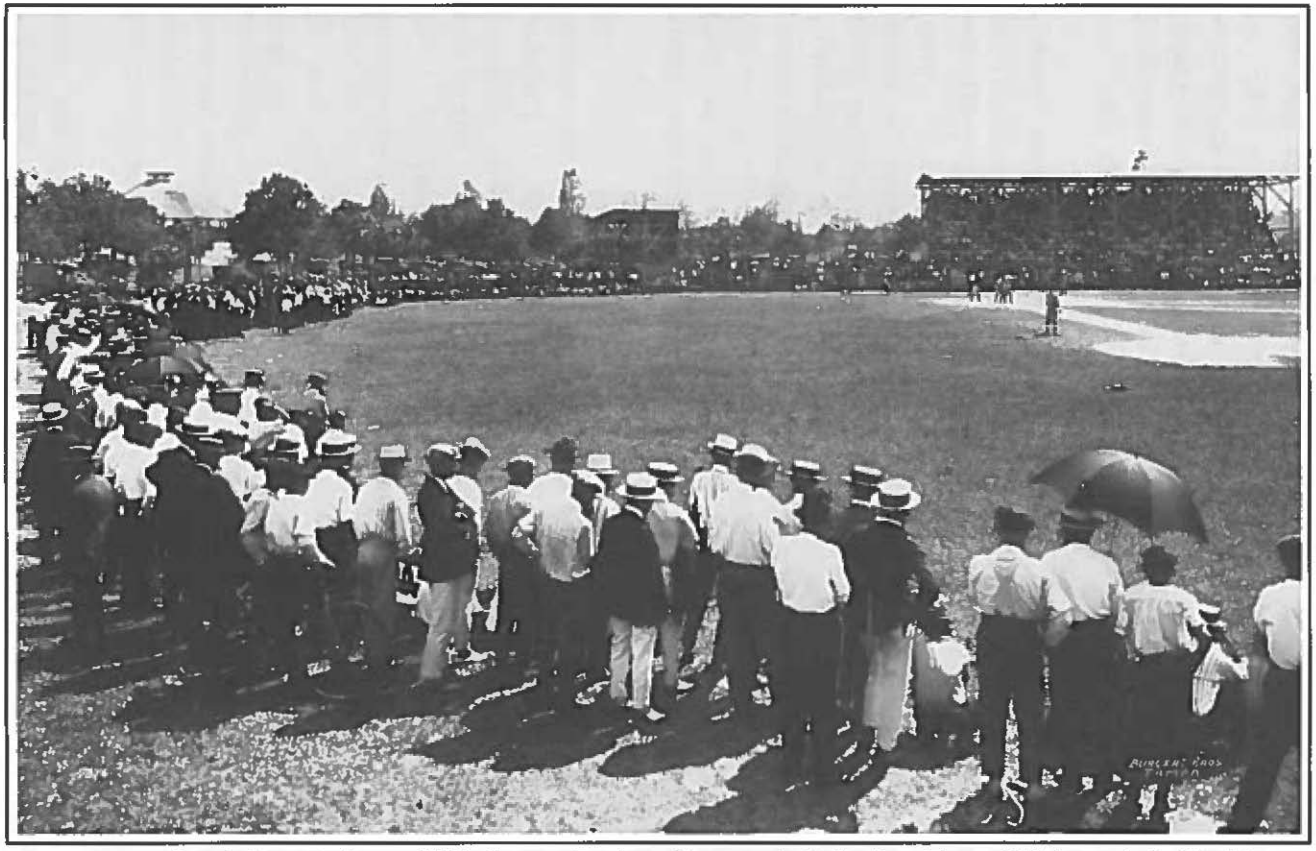
Not limited to standardized, institutionalized baseball activities, the

youths of Ybor City adopted the game as their own as they improvised the rules and equipment on the area's streets and vacant lots. Al Lopez recalled how "everyone would chip in a nickel or a dime or whatever to buy one ball, and that's what we had-one ball, or else we'd put black tape around it after we'd hit for quite a while and play with that." With little concern for regulation measurements, Lopez and his friends "used to have to build our own diamonds. Any sandlot that we could we'd put a diamond there and we'd play in the neighborhood some place."[36]

Additionally, each of the mutual aid societies in Ybor City sponsored a baseball team in the Liga Intersocial. The Circulo Cubano, L'Unione Italiana, Centro Español, and the Centro Asturiano each participated in the Liga Intersocial. Though the Afro-Cuban club, La Union Martí-Maceo, had organized a team at the turn-of-the-twentieth century, Los Gigantes Cubanos, the club failed to consistently support a team and never joined the Liga Intersocial. Anthropologist Susan A. Greenbaum argues the La Union Martí-Maceo membership numbers remained too small to consistently field competitive teams, though she believes that Afro-Cubans would have been barred from playing against whites regardless.[37] One of Greenbaum's informants recalled that when a team of both white and black Cuban players from West Tampa attempted to schedule games against the white Latin teams from the Liga Intersocial, Tampa police "'came and broke it up...[exclaiming,] We don't want no niggers playing over here with no whites.'"[38] The relationship between Afro-Cubans and the other Latin ethnic groups that organized the Liga Intersocial, remained complicated by pressures from American whites from Tampa, whose ideas of race relations were dominated by the policies of Jim Crow segregation.

The league's rules required all of the players to be amateurs, which meant that they could not receive "*renumeración pecuniaria en forma alguna*"(pecuniary renumeration in some form) for their athletic services. Five days before the start of the season, league officials required the teams to present a list of all players, coaches, and managers. If a team later utilized the skills of an unauthorized player, they would forfeit all games in which they had violated league regulations.[39]

The Liga Intersocial played its games on Sunday at MacFarlane Park in West Tampa, which still hosts West Tampa Little League games. Al Lopez recalled that the Intersocial teams were very good since league officials often ignored the rules that prohibited paying talented players, and imported semi-professionals who were paid,



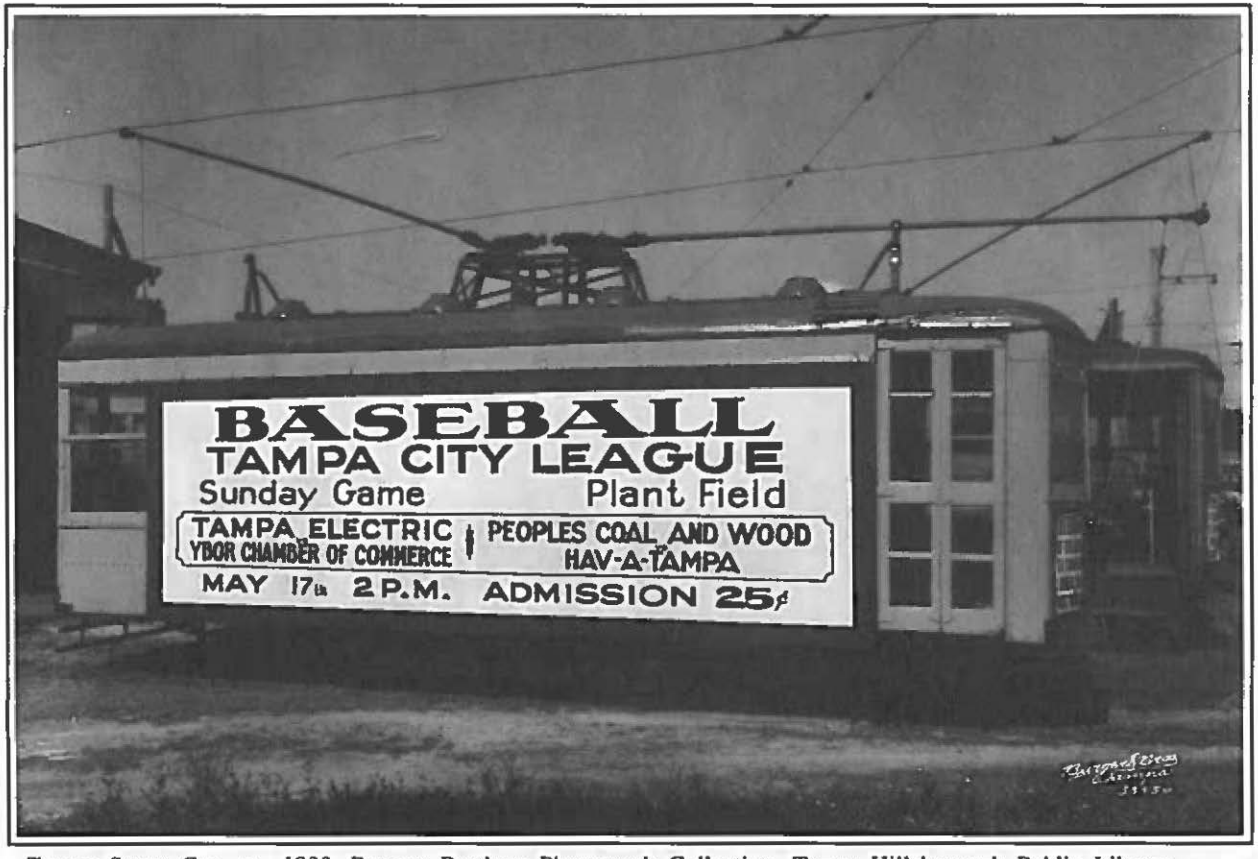
*Spectators at MacFarlane Park, ca. 1923.* Burgert Brothers Photograph Collection, Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library.

"under the table, but not on the payroll." To witness the games, cigar workers would be hanging off the sides of the streetcars that traveled from Ybor City to West Tampa. One West Tampa resident recalled how on game days "they'd have thirteen or fourteen streetcars come full from Ybor City [and] you could see [people] walking in a line on Chestnut Street. It used to be beautiful."[40] The atmosphere was electric, with extensive gambling and alcohol consumption. Fans at the games, "bet like hell," and drank despite the fact that "[i]t was during prohibition."[41] For particularly rowdy contests, the home team was required to arrange police supervison for the games.

On one occasion, in spite of the fact that *"bien sabe nuestra público que las reglas del juego impiden la invasion terrano"* (our public knows well that the rules of the game forbid an invasion of the field), fans charged from the grandstands during a 1923 game between the Circulo Cubano and the Centro Español. In order to keep the peace, *"la policia se vea obligada a cumplir violentemente con sus deberes"* (the police saw themselves as obligated to comply violently with their duties).[42] The episode of baseball-related violence reveals the intense emotional atmosphere of Ybor City's baseball culture. Hoping to avoid similarly violent incidents, the Liga hired additional police for the 1923 championship series between the Circulo Cubano and the Centro Español.

In the league championship series, the Cuban club lost the first game, two to one. Though no major violence erupted, *"dos pequeños lamentables incidentes"* (two small lamentable incidents) provoked indignation among fans of the Cubanos. The first evolved as the second base umpire called a base runner from the Centro Español safe at first base when the Cuban fans thought that he had been clearly thrown out. The other occurred when the manager of the Españoles called attention to the fact that Pullara, *"el lanzador cubano, levantaba el pie del 'box' antes de lanzarla bola,"* (the Cuban pitcher moved his foot from the 'box' (rubber) before pitching the ball). Wiegmann, the home plate umpire reviewed the play and decided that the Cuban pitcher had indeed balked. Wiegmann's call ignited the fury of the Cuban players and fans, but fortunately, *"la tranquilidad y buen juicio renacío y el incidente se redujo a 'polvo'"* (tranquility and good judgement were reborn and the incident was reduced to 'dust').[43]

The Cuban team rallied in the series, winning the next two games nine to six and thirteen to four, respectively. M. Mira, the Circulo Cubano second baseman, and Pedrero, the catcher, led the comeback. In the third game of the series, Mira scored three runs and got three




*Tampa Street Car, ca. 1933.* Burgert Brothers Photograph Collection, Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library

hits in five at-bats, while Pedrero hit safely in each of his three turns at the plate.[44] Without the violence that had plagued earlier meeting between the two teams, the championship series became a tightly contested battle on the field. With a five to two victory in the next game, the Españoles tied the series at two games apiece. Young, the pitcher from the Centro Español, played a remarkable game, striking out batters in a dominating performance.[45] On February 19, 1923, however, the Circulo Cubano team defeated the team from the Centro Español seven to four to claim the league championship. During the championship series, the Circulo Cubano pitchers held Tapanez, the powerful Centro Español first baseman who led all batters over the course of the season with a .341 batting average, to only two hits in seventeen at-bats.[46]

Despite the Liga Intersocial's popularity, by 1924 it had disbanded. Before Al Lopez could join the Circulo Cubano, the league had collapsed under its own weight. As the games became more popular, the officials of the mutual aid societies imported more semi-professional ballplayers from Cuba. As such corrupt practices increased, fans lost interest in the games. Even the most devoted fans became disillusioned when they realized that the league's proceeds were often funneled into the pockets of the various ethnic clubs' administrators. One sportswriter was shocked upon learning the nature of the leagues power structure. By the end, "the fans got a little tired of it [and]...the intersocial league broke up."[47]

By importing players from Cuba and paying them under the table, league officials betrayed the rules that the Latin community had established for their baseball culture. With the decline of the Liga Intersocial, Ybor City's residents no longer played against each other on teams that drew clear distinctions between ethnic groups. After 1925, most Ybor City youths played organized baseball only on public school teams while adult baseball refocused on the teams sponsored by the cigar factory owners as a type of welfare capitalism.

As baseball became increasingly associated with the workplace, the idea that the game represented a vehicle for upward mobility appealed to Ybor City's Latin ethnic groups. Even Spanish workers, despite their privileged status in the workplace, had few opportunities outside of the cigar factories. Baseball offered all ethnic workers the hope of a way to avoid the tedious life in the cigar factories. As a professional baseball player, Al Lopez had been able to "taste foods, follow leisure pursuits, even select a marriage partner who would not have been available had he...worked in the cigar industry."[48] Even Afro-Cubans,

though they could not hope to rival the financial windfall that came with a major league baseball contract, could play in the Negro Leagues. Hipólito Arenas, an Afro-Cuban ballplayer from West Tampa, spent thirteen seasons in the Negro Leagues, playing for the Atlanta Black Crackers, the Kansas City Monarchs, and the Schenectady Mohawks. Arenas recalled that as a baseball player he "was doing pretty good...makin' $150 a month with three meals and a room," though he resented the disparity in the types of opportunities offered to Afro-Cubans and white Latins like Al Lopez.[49]

Players like Lopez and the Tampa Smoker's star pitcher, Caesar Alvarez, represented Ybor City working class Latin heroes who had succeeded in the ranks of professional baseball. The Latin cigar workers could all identify with such Latin heroes who earned their livings playing baseball rather than toiling in the cigar factories. When Lopez began playing for the Tampa Smokers in 1925, at age sixteen, between one thousand and fifteen hundred fans, mostly cigar workers, attended the games to watch him play. Cigar workers would arrange to finish their work by 2:00 P.M. in order to arrive at Plant Park, which was located on the Hillsborough River north the old Tampa Bay Hotel, for the 3:30 P.M. games.[50]

In addition, *La Gaceta*, Ybor City's tri-lingual newspaper published by the renowned *lector* and community leader Victoriano Manteiga, presented the Latin community with the daily exploits of Caesar Alvarez, a Cuban player who had married a Spanish woman, as he pitched against visiting teams from Cincinnati or Washington. *La Gaceta* covered Alvarez's games by hailing the successes of the "latino" Alvarez rather than showcasing the triumphs of the Smokers as a team. By comparison, when the English language newspaper, the *Tampa Daily Times*, covered one of Alvarez's appearances on the mound, the sportswriter acknowledged his talent but focused on how members of the crowd were "well pleased with the look of the [visiting Washington] Senators." While the non-Latin newspaper primarily addressed the pre-season development of the major league team, *La Gaceta* attempted to promote a hero for the Latin community of Ybor City.[51]

Players like Al Lopez and Caesar Alvarez represented neighborhood pride, as well as the possibility of financial success during the uncertainty of the years before the economic collapse of the Great Depression. Ybor City residents recalled feeling the effects of the economic downturn long before the stock market crash in 1929, as "the boom was over around 1926," and "we started feeling the

depression around 1927, 1928."[52] During such times, recalled Ybor City native Judge E. J. Salcines, all of the community's Latins drew hope from the achievements of players like Al Lopez.[53]

Players like Al Lopez instilled a sense of pride in the Latin community, and fans from Ybor City remained loyal to him throughout his career. Ferdie Pacheco recalled cheering for the Brooklyn Dodgers, simply because Lopez was their catcher. When Lopez ended his playing days and began managing, Ybor City fans switched their loyalties to express their continued support for the Latin star. "Gentleman Al Lopez. Even today he is spoken of with reverence" in Ybor City.[54]

While players like Lopez competed at the highest levels of baseball, Ybor City residents also played against non-Latins in Tampa, helping to cement a neighborhood Latin identity by providing a sense that Ybor City residents were somehow distinct from other groups. Ybor City's ethnic cigar workers began to identify themselves as Latin, in part, because Tampa's non-Latin community often defined them as such. Through local city and state leagues, Spring Training competitions, and youth sports, Ybor City baseball teams encountered a non-Latin community that often failed to note the distinctions among the various represented ethnic groups.

Throughout the 1920s teams from Ybor City challenged non-Latin teams in Tampa. In 1923, the Hav-A-Tampa cigar factory team issued a general challenge to Tampa's baseball community after defeating a team from the Sacred Heart College. Laying down the gauntlet, the team encouraged "[a]ny manager interested in arranging a game with the cigar stars," to call on "B. Manniscolca at No. 929 1-2 Seventh Avenue."[55]

In 1925, A. Montoto, the sports editor of the Ybor City paper, *La Prensa*, attempted to import a Havana baseball team to represent Ybor City in the Florida State League. The team was "ready to come to Florida on 24 hours notice." Montoto, however, failed to apply to league officials in time and the teams from Sanford, Lakeland, Tampa, and St. Petersburg began the season without a Cuban team. Baseball fans and sportswriters felt disappointed, since a Cuban team might have reinvigorated the league. In previous exhibitions, the "rivalry was keen between a Cuban team and a team made up of Americans representing Tampa. The stands were packed for every game played."[56]

Baseball fans in Ybor City and Tampa drew clear distinctions in their use of terms such as "American" and "Latin." Though the language that they used was culturally constructed and subject to

reinterpretation over time, scholars can reasonably assume that the "terms of discourse were familiar to Tampans. They may not have always agreed on who, locally, belonged in each category, but they defined a common set of parameters."[57] Whether defined by hegemonic non-Latins from the upper classes of society, or by the cigar workers seeking to create a sense of solidarity, historical actors in Tampa and Ybor City understood the term, "Latin" as a description of Cubans, Spaniards, and Italians in Ybor City. Similarly, the Spanish-language press used the term "American" to identify non-Latins residing in Tampa, beyond the boundaries of Ybor City's ethnic neighborhoods. Employing the terms of discourse on ethnicity in a March 1923 sports column, *La Gaceta* announced "*[c]omenzará el Domingo la serie entre 'latinos' y americanos, en el parque Mcfarlane [sic]*?" (the series (of baseball games) between the 'latinos' and Americans was beginning on Sunday at MacFarlane Park).[58]

While fans in Tampa may have appreciated the rivalry with a talented Cuban team, the supporters of other Florida State League teams were often unfriendly to visiting Hispanic players. Al Lopez recalled hearing taunts and being called a "Cuban 'nigger,'" despite the fact that both of his parents came from Spain, while traveling to small central Florida towns as a member of the Tampa Smokers. "I'm not even Cuban," he remembered, "but they called me a Cuban 'nigger.'" Though Lopez attributed the insults to typical baseball gamesmanship, such insensitivities revealed the antagonism that many lower class whites felt towards Cuban, Spanish, and presumably Italian, Latins as a single, socially inferior ethnic minority. Signs in the Tampa attraction of Sulphur Springs even insisted that "'[n]o Latins or dogs [were] allowed to go swimming.'"[59] Though such antagonism may have often been just a part of the game, constant exposure to taunts would certainly have contributed to the image the Latins were somehow distinct from non-Latins throughout Florida.

The fact that major league teams conducted their pre-season training in the Tampa Bay area also offered Ybor City athletes the opportunity to play against the most talented players from teams such as the Washington Senators, who would have otherwise seemed distant and remote. By 1925, it had become customary for the Senators to open their spring training season against an All Stars Cuban team from Ybor City. At Plant Park the Senators played a team from Ybor City in a 1926 game that *La Gaceta* described as an important contest between the "'latinos' de Tampa" and the major league stars from Washington. The opportunity to match their skills with some of the best American

moralists, and the post-bankruptcy careers of several people who legally filed for bankruptcy. He then deftly deals with the cat-and-mouse game debtors and creditors played as they adjusted to constantly changing (and uncertain) market conditions, and learned how to manipulate the federal law. Debtors employed strategies such as "kite flying" exchanges to raise funds, preferring certain creditors over others, and acquiring short-term loans from friends and relatives rather than suspending operations when warnings signaled inevitable ruin. Most creditors incurred substantial debt as well; they therefore sought preferential treatment by employing moral suasion, outright bribery, and the involuntary bankruptcy clause in the 1841 Act. The United States' third experiment with a federal bankruptcy law ultimately failed to alter the game, however; evidenced by the ways in which Americans vaulted themselves into debt to fuel economic booms later critiqued by Twain, Warner, and other social commentators.

The New York case study will disappoint some readers. The collective biography includes neither the insolvents who declared legal bankruptcy, the bankrupts who fled to the south or west, Southerners who held property in slaves, the many who descended into manual labor, nor those who proposed alternatives to capitalism in the wake of failure. But Balleisen acknowledges these gaps in his study and calls for further research to enhance important dialogues between economic, social, and cultural historians.

Examining both the economic "roots of misfortune" as well as the social consequences of "moving downward in the world," Edward Balleisen challenges historians to reexamine the history of American business, legal, and middle-class culture. For better or worse, capitalism triumphed in the United States, and he demonstrates that the experience with bankruptcy promoted that end. As middle-class strivers adapted to the realities of widespread insolvency, they searched for innovative ways to lower their risks so that they could continue to participate in market expansion. In their quest for greater economic security, America's economic "losers" thus altered the meaning of economic independence through salaried employment, thereby supporting the rise of big business among those willing to "bear the anxieties associated with proprietary responsibility." They re-energized the capitalist system by exploiting new opportunities in "wrecking," as vulture capitalists, lawyers, administrators, credit reporters, salesmen, technical experts, and others who learned to make a profit on the business of bankruptcy. Moreover, *Navigating Failure* supports the findings of Naomi Lamoreaux (*Insider Lending*, 1994) and Sven

Beckert (*The Monied Metropolis*, 2001). Social connections mattered to post-bankruptcy success. Those who managed to "dust themselves off and rejoin the scramble for riches and social status" tended to have the family members, business associates, and political friends who could provide inside information, post-bankruptcy employment, and the funds required to resume business operations.

The strategies employed by Balleisen's debtors and creditors also demonstrate the ways in which native-born Americans and immigrants alike have continued to redefine the American cultural ideal of "getting ahead." *Navigating Failure* thus provides a model for the examination of understudied groups in American history, particularly the great middling mass of workers and consumers who have adjusted to, rather than challenged, the capitalist order from the nineteenth century forward. Balleisen's "psychology of denial" may also help to explain recent history, including the faith in "economic expansion without end" that prevailed in the United States during the decade preceding September 11, 2001. It also helps us to understand the hang-wringing moralism that has followed in the wake of Enron, Worldcom, and other business and personal failures. This is a must-read for anyone interested in the boom and bust cycles and socialization processes that have defined American capitalist culture, including the initial euphoria that tends to precede embarrassment, chastisement, reform, and eventual absolution.

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Steven P. Brown. *Trumping Religion: The New Christian Right, the Free Speech Clause, and the Courts.* Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002, 208 pp. $35.00. IBSN 0-8173-1178-5.

The Christian Right continues to attract the attention of scholars, even after the collapse of the Christian Coalition. As perhaps the only genuine social movement of the American Right during the twentieth century, it helps us refine our understanding of the dynamics of such movements. As the most episodic movement of the century, whose fortunes have ebbed and flowed over time, it invites us to consider changing organizational bases and tactics.

The principle tactic of the Christian Coalition and other groups of the 1980s and 1990s was electoral mobilization, and not surprisingly most research on the movement has focused on its impact on

presidential, congressional, and state and local elections. These studies have revealed a movement that was especially strong in the South, but that had pockets of strength in the Midwest and even in the Pacific Northwest. The forty million voter guides that the Christian Coalition claimed to have distributed during the 1992 elections is a visible symbol of the centrality of electoral politics to this movement.

Yet elections were not the only tactic used by the Christian Right in the past two decades. For a time in the mid 1990s the Christian Coalition fielded a skilled team of lobbyists, and other groups like Concerned Women for America have long lobbied local government officials. Steven Brown draws our attention to yet another form of activity–litigation. Despite the considerable electoral success of the Christian Right in some states, it may well be in litigation that the movement will make its most lasting victories.

Brown has produced a lucid and readable book that will be of special interest to scholars of the Christian Right and of social movement litigation, but that can also serve in the classroom. I assigned the book in my seminar on the Christian Right in the fall of 2003. The book provides sufficient context that even those who have not studied the Christian Right or who know little about litigation strategies may find it of interest.

Brown begins with a brief history of the emergence of legal institutions and strategies by conservative Christian groups. He then proceeds to list and describe the key players in this arena, and for this alone the book may be of interest to those who merely seek to keep up with changing jurisprudence on church and state. I might quibble a bit with the list of groups included in this chapter, but Brown covers the main players nicely. The book next explores the legal strategies of Christian Right groups, in a chapter that might profitably have been much longer and more detailed. The core of the book explores specific legal arguments and their impact on specific cases. Although the Christian Right initially sought to argue that the United States is a Christian nation and should embody Christian teachings in its laws, the movement quickly shifted to arguments about free speech and free exercise. Thus many of the key cases in this area are framed by Christian conservatives as about free expression of religion, and by its opponents as about establishment. Table 4 is a nice listing of many of the key cases in this area, beginning in 1984 and ending with Branch Ministries *v.* Rossotti in 2000.

Brown also very briefly explores the other tools of Christian Right legal foundations, including cultivating the media, public education,

and pre-litigation negotiation. His brief conclusion explores the limitations of the free speech approach, noting that the precedents established by Christian Right groups have been used by gay and lesbian student groups. There are hints of normative arguments in the conclusion, although they are not fully developed.

This is a book that all serious students of the Christian Right, of social movement litigation, or of church and state issues will want to read. It provides a nice overview of the area, and a nearly comprehensive listing of groups and cases. It might have been more attractive to undergraduates had Brown let some of the voices of the movement sing more in his text. Moreover, I got the impression that Brown has a point of view here that might have been interesting, but it does not shine through in the introduction or conclusion. But this is a useful book that I will continue to consult as litigation in this area progresses.

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W. Fitzhugh Brundage, ed. *Where These Memories Grow: History, Memory, and Southern Identity.* Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, c. 2000, xi, 384 pp. $19.95. ISBN 0-8078-4886-7.

No historian, student, or observer of the South would deny that the region's people have maintained a strong and persistent attachment to their history. Memories of the past, and especially of the Civil War and the cause lost by the white South, have long been identified as central components of southern regional identity. This new examination of memory in the South, however, offers an important reminder that the ways in which southerners have remembered and used the past have been more complex and more diverse than a static assertion of the Lost Cause.

*Where These Memories Grow: History, Memory, and Southern Identity* is a fascinating and provocative collection of essays written by twelve scholars of the South and edited by W. Fitzhugh Brundage, William B. Umstead Professor of History at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Each essay centers on a specific moment in time, or a specific place, in which southerners defined and asserted their understanding of the past. The sheer range and diversity of the essays is this volume's greatest strength. The authors take readers from the

post-revolutionary South to the 1990s, from black communities in Virginia to a white women's organization in Texas, from pageants to lynchings, and from private writings to very public monuments. Virtually no one is excluded. There is no single memory of the South, these essays collectively argue, just as there is no single group, or person, that holds a unique claim to shaping southern memory.

Memory is an active and ongoing process, Brundage argues in his introduction, "No Deed but Memory," an engaging essay that establishes the theoretical framework for the rest of the book. Memory is the interpretation and reinterpretation of the past, Brundage writes, and, invoking the words of Frederick Bartlett, "an affair of construction rather than one of mere reproduction." Memory consists of what is both recalled and suppressed, what is visible and what is silent. And its importance comes from being "inextricably bound up with group identity," providing a group with a sense of a shared past while shaping its "aspirations for the future." The effort to define that past is an effort to legitimize and support a group's "cultural authority," and thus, its claim to power in politics and society. The study of memory, then, is the study of identity and power.

The connection between memory, group identity, and power is especially clear in several essays examining African-American memory. Gregg Kimball's study of antebellum Virginia traces African Americans' expressions of their Revolutionary heritage, while Kathleen Clark's examination of post-emancipation celebrations likewise studies how blacks asserted their own understanding of the Civil War. Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp's examination of "race history," written by black ministers at the end of the nineteenth century, further documents this effort to acknowledge a place for African Americans in the nation's history, an effort tied to the larger quest for civil rights and equality. These essays emphasize the recollection of the past; others consider how silence and suppression could be equally potent. Anne Sarah Rubin's essay on Confederate identity traces how white Southerners sidestepped the difficult subject of slavery by emphasizing memories of their Revolutionary past, while Stephanie Yuhl's investigation of early twentieth-century Charleston shows how elite white women involved in historic preservation chose not to emphasize the Civil War, thereby "nationalizing Charleston's past."

Historians of the Gulf South will be particularly interested in three of the volume's essays. Brundage's own work on Acadian memory, and the revitalization of an Acadian ethnic identity in the first half of the twentieth century, traces the early roots of today's Cajun "revival" in

Louisiana culture. In a study of pageants, tours, and especially, the Acadian bicentennial in 1955, Brundage points out how tourism could influence the business of memory in the twentieth century. Holly Beachley Brear's essay on today's conflicts over the preservation of the Alamo emphasizes the sometimes acrimonious struggle involved in remembering: in this case criticism of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, the guardians of the Alamo, has pitted these women against their male critics, black, white, and Latino, who desire a more inclusive view of that historic site. Finally, in one of the most intriguing essays in the collection, John Howard reminds us of the connection between collective memory and sexuality, as he examines the silence that shrouded gay men involved in a murder in Brandon, Mississippi, in 1895.

These essays, along with the other equally compelling studies in this volume, combine to make a powerful statement about the complexity of southern memory. Anyone interested in the way in which the past, and perceptions of the past, have shaped southern history and identity should read this collection. Fortunately, several of the essays are excerpts from larger works in progress that will undoubtedly open up even more questions and invite more explorations into southern memory for years to come.

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Wade G. Dudley. *Splintering the Wooden Wall: The British Blockade of the United States, 1812-1815.* Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2002, 256 pp. $32.95. ISBN 1-55750-167-X.

Dudley maintains that the use of a naval blockade is a valuable national strategy in times of war and peace. With this in mind, he asserts this monograph is a "first attempt at defining blockade effectiveness during the age of sail." More specifically, it examines England's use of the blockade during the second conflict between Great Britain and the United States in the early nineteenth century. Using primary and secondary sources, the author challenges international consensus, based on historian Alfred Thayer Mahan's work *Sea Power in Its Relations to the War of 1812*, that the Royal Navy's blockade was extremely effective.

Following a brief historiographical introduction, Dudley immerses the reader in the history of the Royal Navy's use of the blockade in

previous conflicts between 1642 and 1783. After demonstrating England's experience with naval interdiction, the text shifts to definitions of the various forms of blockades including military, commercial, economic, distant, close, linear military, and echeloned military. In addition, Dudley provides seven principles of the blockade, extensive in detail, which provide a template for his evaluation of the Royal Navy's three-year effort off the American coastline. Subsequent chapters address the maritime capabilities of both nations prior to the outbreak of hostilities and a cogent review of the struggle's maritime geography. He splits the blockade into three chronological phases: Phase 1) 1812, Phase 2) 1813, Phase 3) 1814-1815. The key chapter in this book, however, directly examines whether the blockade really was the wooden wall believed by Mahan and those historians he influenced.

Dudley contends that Mahan's thesis was flawed thus challenging popular consensus. Why did the blockade fail? Dudley argues that "[d]espite warnings of imminent war, the Admiralty failed to take steps reallocating forces to the North American command," a problem which continued throughout the war. Secondly, strategic changes implemented by the British in 1814 also contributed to the blockade's failure. This occurred when the British launched "massive raids along the Atlantic shores and in the Chesapeake" to divert American forces from key areas. This alteration drained the already weak blockade, according to Dudley, even more. Additionally, American privateers and U.S. warships taking prizes also diminished the effectiveness of the blockade because either the prizes were on blockade duty or forces on blockade were forced to chase the elusive American sailing vessels. Poor understanding of the American geography also crippled the ability of the Royal Navy to exert force. Lastly, the arrogant attitudes of Royal Navy officers, who believed the young republic could not challenge them, enabled the Americans to penetrate Britain's "impregnable" floating screen.

Awarded the John Lyman Award for Best U.S. Maritime History Book from the North American Society for Oceanic History (NASOH), *Splintering the Wooden Wall* does not disappoint. Well written with penetrating analysis, students and professional historians alike will find Dudley's treatise informative and historically myth-breaking. However, an examination of the bibliography leaves the reader questioning whether Dudley exhaustively researched British sources which might have altered his conclusions. Also, the author should have guarded against broad statements such as the "blockade remains a potential tool

in every nation's naval arsenal" or the "blockade, however, has been and remains the most damaging naval stratagem against a maritime opponent." These minor problems notwithstanding, this study will provide historians with a new perspective on the Royal Navy's "supposed" impenetrable blockade of the United States during the War of 1812.

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Jennifer Eichstedt and Stephen Small. *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums.* Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002, 312 pp., illustrated. $45.00. ISBN 1-58834-071-6.

Examining how Americans have acknowledged or neglected their own historic past in a museum setting has recently become a subject of great importance to a variety of scholars. The interpretive frameworks of the live slave auction at Colonial Williamsburg, the display of the Enola Gay at the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum or even political origins of a historic house, historians, sociologists, preservationists, curators and others realized that such historic exhibits are important purveyors of knowledge to the public. Therefore, by understanding how the past is communicated, we can then evaluate and comprehend its impact on American culture.

The interpretation of slavery at the public and private plantation museums in the American South is the subject that sociologist Jennifer L. Eichstedt and historian Stephen Small investigate in *Representations of Slavery*. By touring more than one hundred plantation museums in Virginia, Georgia, and Louisiana; twenty locations organized by African Americans; and eighty general history sites, their findings indicate that the experience and legacy of slavery is still incorrectly presented in the larger context of a racialized ideology.

According to the authors, the majority of these sites build narratives of history that hold white elites of the pre-emancipation South in the highest regard and trivialize the experience of slavery. Using their own classification system of four interpretative categories–symbolic annihilation, trivialization, segregated knowledge, and relative incorporation–the authors measure how these museum sites interpret black-white relations. Through a sociological analysis, the authors attempt to demonstrate how the strategies that these sites employ are

linked to representations and practices in the larger social, political and cultural worlds in which they were constructed.

They began this project by devising a list of plantation sites that were "most visible" throughout the southern region of the country. Small and Eichstedt did not publish their findings nor adequately explain why the other Gulf South states such as Mississippi, Alabama, or Texas were not included in this study except that they believed that it was quite likely that these practices were wide-spread across the South.

After repeatedly visiting museums across Virginia, Georgia and Louisiana and noting how docents delivered interpretations, the authors then placed the sites within the paradigms that they constructed. Historic plantation sites such as Berkeley Plantation in Virginia and Nottoway Plantation in Louisiana displayed evidence of a complete erasure of slavery by placing emphasis on building construction, family history, and furnishings with no mention of African Americans. Some sites such as the Robert Toombs House in Georgia trivialized the institution by portraying stereotypical images of slaves as untrustworthy yet grateful and loyal to the master even after emancipation.

Different kinds of representations of slavery were also found at sites that segregated discussion of slave life through the use of specialized optional tours for visitors. These kinds of tours are offered at larger historic homes or sites such as Colonial Williamsburg's Carter's Grove and George Washington's Mount Vernon. The authors did find relative incorporation of African Americans at several sites such as Laura Plantation in Louisiana and the Carlyle House in Alexandria, Virginia. These museums actively engaged in telling stories that portrayed slaves not as props on the plantation landscape, but rather as active human participants who played an integral part in the daily routine at the site.

After examining Eurocentric plantation museums, Eichstedt and Small found counter narratives at sites organized by African Americans in which efforts have been made to centralize the experiences of slavery. Even though the authors admit that many of these museums, which range from the Booker T. Washington Monument in Virginia to the Negro Heritage Trail in Savannah, Georgia, cannot be classified as plantations, these types of sites do not neglect the brutality of the experiences of African-American slaves.

Throughout this book, the authors maintain that though many plantation sites are moving towards incorporation of slavery, the

majority allow Eurocentric exhibition narratives to persist. The authors certainly make a strong case based on their collected evidence, but what else could strengthen such a study? While calling for debate and intervention on these issues is certainly appropriate, the authors might have made a stronger case by examining the administrative histories of these sites. By understanding how these museums were created, we can begin to gain valuable insights into how and why their interpretations speak as they do. To get information on the administrative histories of these museums, the authors should have included discussions with curators, interviewed governing boards or examined the administration archives which do exist for many historic sites.

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Tom Ewing, ed. *The Bill Monroe Reader.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000. xi, 301. $29.95. ISBN 0-252-02500-8.

The University of Illinois Press continues its Music in American Life series with a new reference work on one the most important American musical forms: bluegrass. Tom Ewing has edited a focused collection on bluegrass founder Bill Monroe. Very few people can claim to have invented an entire style of music, but Bill Monroe is one who can. Credited as the "Father of Bluegrass Music," Monroe blended old southern mountain music, country and western, and gospel. He arranged it for a combo featuring himself on mandolin and singing, others on guitar, banjo, and other instruments, sped it up, and created a unique musical form. From his emergence on the music scene in the 1930s until his death in 1996, he championed bluegrass music and influenced countless other bluegrass groups who followed in his wake. That career is chronicled in *The Bill Monroe Reader.*

Ewing, who played in Monroe's band for ten years in the 1980s and 1990s, began collecting articles about him back in 1961 when he first encountered Monroe's music. In this collection, he offers sixty-five articles spanning the period between 1937 and 1998. All but two have been previously published. Ewing doesn't promise that this is all that has been written about Monroe, or even that these are the best articles on him. Rather, Ewing presents articles that are "the most informative and/or enlightening" written during his life or appearing in the years immediately after his death. The articles are in

synthesizing many different strands of European-Native American relations into a single study. Gallay clarifies how policies among some groups forced a reorientation in the relationships between all groups. It is on this basis, rather than on the more specific topic of the slave trade, that it can be recommended.

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Patterson Toby Graham. *A Right to Read: Segregation and Civil Rights in Alabama's Public Libraries, 1900-1965.* Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002, 191 pp. $37.50. ISBN 0-8173-1144-0.

The introduction to Patterson Toby Graham's *A Right to Read: Segregation and Civil Rights in Alabama's Public Libraries, 1900-1965* describes a blatant assault on two African-American patrons attempting to desegregate Anniston's public library in 1963, the most tumultuous year of the American Civil Rights Movement. In 1961, a white mob outside Anniston had set fire to an interstate bus carrying freedom riders. In the 1963 attack, police officials refused to implement a desegregation policy approved by the library board, so at 3:30 P.M. on September 15, the white mob vented their anger on Reverends W. B. McClain and Quintus Reynolds in front of Anniston's Carnegie Library. As Graham reminds us, the Anniston attack was overshadowed for many observers by a more notorious event the same day—the bombing in nearby Birmingham of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church where four African-American girls perished.

Graham meets the challenge of examining sixty-five years of library history in Alabama by judicious selection of examples and careful recreation of the historical context of each. Thus the establishment of branch libraries for African Americans, first in Birmingham in 1918 and then in Mobile in 1931, occurred during a period when Andrew Carnegie's philanthropy provided the first public libraries for whites but ignored the needs of African Americans. Graham asserts correctly that paternalistic racism governed the manner in which white leaders acknowledged the need for branch libraries for African Americans and negotiated their creation in Birmingham and Mobile. Even so, the process in Birmingham was not replicated in Mobile, underscoring the Gulf South theme that race relations on the Gulf Coast were more salutary, progressive, and, ultimately, different from regions further inland.

Although Depression-era programs in Alabama missed opportunities to expand library services to African Americans because whites administered the funds, Graham shows the determination of African Americans in Huntsville, Montgomery, and Birmingham to create libraries for their communities within the confines of segregation. In Huntsville and Montgomery, these efforts hinged on the work of two remarkable females, Dulcina DeBerry and Bertha Pleasant Williams, respectively. Williams was Alabama's first African American with an accredited degree in library science and the first to speak on Montgomery's WSFA radio station. In Montgomery, the African-American push for library service predated the 1955 bus boycott by several years, and in Birmingham, the Negro Advisory Committee organized and articulated the need for improved library service in 1953, a full decade before direct action civil rights demonstrations.

Ultimately, as Graham indicates, the desegregation of Alabama's libraries was part of the American Civil Rights Movement, which succeeded because African Americans employed direct action to secure their rights. When faced with court orders from white judges sympathetic to desegregation, many southern cities opted to close their public parks, swimming pools, or even schools—but never libraries. The Read-in Movement—sit-in demonstrations, usually by African American high school students or collegians, at libraries—originated in Danville, Virginia, in 1960 and quickly spread to Alabama. With only the threat of demonstrations, libraries in Mobile in 1960 and Huntsville in 1962 voluntarily desegregated. In 1962 in Montgomery, however, civic leaders devised "vertical integration" as a response to Judge Frank M. Johnson's injunction to desegregate the city's libraries. The night before the scheduled desegregation, teams of city workers hauled away tables and chairs to prevent patrons of different races from sharing library tables. Patrons of all Montgomery branches stood during library visits, unless they remembered to bring a folding chair.

The integration of libraries in Montgomery was a public event that drew much attention from the Ku Klux Klan, as well as vocal opposition from moderate whites. By contrast, in Birmingham, read-ins occurred quietly inside the main library in the spring of 1963, while in Birmingham's streets, police faced down African-American demonstrators with police dogs and fire hoses. *A Right to Read* enlivens the historical record with masterful use of oral history accounts, where individuals tell how they overcame inertia, fear, and even KKK intimidation to take a stand against the injustice of segregation.

Throughout *A Right to Read*, Graham highlights the conflict for southern librarians between regional values and professional standards.

Segregation forced a type of censorship on librarians in Alabama and elsewhere, and white librarians, who placed freedom of expression, intellectual freedom, and professional values ahead of Jim Crow segregation, are celebrated in the final chapter as staunch allies of the Civil Rights Movement. For example, Alabama native Patricia Blalock guided library desegregation in—of all places—Selma, where the first White Citizens Council (WCC) was established shortly after the *Brown* ruling in 1954. Selma's library board never established a separate branch for African Americans, and two of the board's members were ardent segregationists and highly visible in the WCC. Blalock's brand of personal suasion and insistence on unanimity from the board proved very effective. In 1963—two years before the events of "bloody" Selma related to voting rights, she coaxed the library board to decide unanimously in favor of desegregating Selma's library.

*A Right to Read* is Graham's first book, based on a doctoral dissertation that won multiple awards. This author's work will engage readers who enjoy southern history, women's history, and the Civil Rights Movement. The book's scholarship is impressive and includes a useful bibliographic essay. The editing is flawless.

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Elna C. Green, ed. *The New Deal and Beyond: Social Welfare in the South since 1930.* Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2003, xix, 275 pp. Cloth, $49.95, ISBN 0-8203-2481-7. Paper, $19.95, ISBN 0-8203-2482-5.

Green has gathered an interesting collection of essays that explore the implementation of southern social welfare programs from the New Deal to the Great Society. She acknowledges gaps in the coverage and points to these as areas in need of further study. The local studies in this book provide insight into how racism made the day-to-day workings of social welfare challenging in the South. Several of the essays deal with gulf states, including Texas, Florida, Alabama, and Louisiana. While their location as Gulf states is not the focus of this book, historians interested in this region will find much useful information.

Part One covers the New Deal era and illuminates a South struggling with industrial, political, and social modernization. Southerners wishing to preserve traditional power structures clashed with New Dealers. Georgina Hickey's essay on Georgia's WPA sewing

rooms argues that, in a shift from Progressive Era reform, both the workers and project administrators pushed the federal government to identify the women who worked in the rooms as workers, not as mothers in need of charity. In Brenda Taylor's essay, visiting nurses from the Farm Security Administration pushed farm families toward modernization and toward middle-class behavior. Taylor's work used extensive personal information collected by caseworkers, but she failed to delve deeper into the negative impact of modernization on rural communities, as did Ted Olson in his essay on the building of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Tourism, generated by the parkway, opened doors for rural poor, but had the negative influence of making them dependant on tourist dollars and in turn consumers of goods they had formerly produced. In her essay on Georgia schools and segregationist Eugene Tallmadge, Anne Short Chirhart argues the battlefield was between tradition and modernity. School segregation, she posits, was not all about racism, but also fear of losing traditional power arrangements shored up by segregation. Jeffrey Cole examines the problem of transient people searching for work and/or relief and the role of federally run transient centers. Southerners feared that outsiders looking for relief would unfairly burden local resources. Traditionally, locals cared for their own poor, but the influx of transients to warm climate areas, like Florida and Texas, strained local resources. Once the government closed relief stations, locals realized they wanted federal assistance to deal with transients. During the New Deal era, people across the South often looked to the federal government to solve social welfare problems.

The second group of essays highlights how money from the Great Society's "War on Poverty" empowered poor people. Changes resulted from the act of withholding federal money until a program complied with Civil Rights Act of 1964. Other changes ensued from the way money was used to get the poor involved in implementing programs designed to help them. State and local leaders began to view poverty and racism as roadblocks to economic modernization. Jill Quadagno and Steve McDonald show how Medicare helped desegregate hospitals in the South. After numerous court battles, the government still had no effective way to force compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Withholding Medicare payments to segregated hospitals finally forced compliance. Robert Korstad and James Leloudis argue in their essay about the North Carolina Fund that volunteers helped expand the urban poor's sense of rights, which in turn lead them to agitate on their own behalf. Empowered by this grassroots activism, locals took on leadership roles in ending poverty and improving the state's economic

outlook. Similarly, Kent Germany argues that poverty empowered the poor in New Orleans. Fear of what poor blacks would do to the state's economy spurred city government into action. Germany illustrates how grassroots activism of local residents influenced city hall. Susan Youngblood Ashmore examines the role of private charity in her essay on the Head Start program in Mobile, Alabama. When public schools could not, or would not, integrate Head Start programs; the Catholic diocese stepped into the void. In spite of Governor Wallace's meddling, the Catholic Church was able to provide Mobile with an integrated student body and an integrated staff, which in turn fostered grassroots civil rights groups. The last essay, by Marsha Rose, is an awkward fit in this volume. Rose argues that the Kentucky Foundation for Women, founded by Sallie Bingham shows the importance of feminism on welfare policy. Bingham believed the feminine prospective in art would change attitudes of the public. Unfortunately, Bingham's foundation only reached a small group of people. Rose's argument that one could fight poverty by enhancing women's self-worth is murky at best.

Overall, the first half of the book fits nicely around the theme of tradition versus modernity, and a continued search for order in economically and socially confusing times. Local studies provide an important look at how welfare programs affected their recipients. The second half of the book focuses on how poverty affected the economics of the South, giving both elites and the poor a stake in creating viable social welfare programs. Throughout the South, the tradition of racism created barriers that often required pressure from the federal government to break down. This volume would be most helpful to those with some knowledge of social reform in these two periods. Without that background, one might underestimate the importance of these local studies.

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John T. Juricek. *Georgia and Florida Treaties, 1763-1776.* Vol. 12 of *Early American Indian Documents: Treaties and Laws, 1607-1789,*ed. Alden T. Vaughan. Bethesda, MD: University Publications of America, 2002, 581 pp. $235.00. ISBN 0-89093-180-1.

In this projected twenty-volume series, University Publications of America attempts to present all laws passed by any governing body in America prior to 1789 dealing with Indians as well as other significant

diplomatic documents, including records of treaty conferences; treaties; council minutes; reports of interpreters, emissaries and others; selected correspondence and deeds. General series editor Alden T. Vaughan writes in the preface to the volume that the aim of this series is to put "reliable texts of key documents into the hands of scholars and the general public as quickly and economically as possible." To achieve that goal, editors have relied upon previously printed versions of manuscript material, but in the case of this volume, most are transcriptions of original manuscript documents, the majority of which are part of the British Colonial Office correspondence files at the Public Record Office in Kew. In his foreword, Professor Juricek points out that three-fourths of the documents he included have never been published. Moreover, he eschewed reliance on previously published transcriptions of documents. He notes that the extra trouble was worth the effort in that numerous transcription errors in previously published sources have been corrected as a result.

The volume follows the standards established for the entire series, including an introduction by the editor, as well as introductions for the various chapters, footnotes identifying people and pertinent issues related to the documents and a bibliography. Also included are a number of illustrations. Professor Juricek organizes his documents regionally and chronologically, and provides a summary of key events, issues and personalities in each chapter introduction. Chapter one covers Georgia documents, 1764-1768, reproducing those dealing with the aftermath of the Seven Years' War, as well as issues of boundaries and trade. The Creeks take center stage, although some Cherokee documents are included. Chapter two takes events in Georgia from 1769-1773, and chapter three covers Indian-Georgia relations through early 1776. Chapters four and five chronicle West Florida relations with the Creek, Choctaw, and Chickasaw Indians. Chapter five focuses on West Florida diplomacy as the Creek-Choctaw war takes center stage. The section on West Florida concludes in 1775, and covers the continuing Creek-Choctaw conflict as well as trade and boundary troubles in that colony. The last chapter takes British East Florida through early negotiations with the Lower Creeks in the early 1760s through the opening phases of the American Revolution,

Professor Juricek has done an exemplary job in transcribing and annotating the documents. An important consideration is the inclusion of full Indian names and marks at the conclusion of many official documents. Documents are numbered in each chapter and given an identifying title, with date and a full citation and remarks, where

appropriate, on the original. Juricek's selection and thorough treatment of and respect for the written documents make them the definitive edited versions. Professor Juricek is also the editor of the previously published volume 11 in the series, *Georgia Treaties, 1733-1763.*

The volume's flaws are not the result of the editor's document selection or annotation, but rather due to the strictures of the series design. Dividing the documents by European colony presents some continuity on a number of issues, but in the case of the Creek Indians, who dealt with East and West Florida and Georgia, the result is often jarring. The most glaring flaw, and one that significantly reduces the usefulness of this volume and every volume in the series, is the lack of a thorough index to both the documents themselves and the annotations. An index is a key tool for any documentary editing project and should have been a priority. The addition of maps would have been a boon for most readers as well and more helpful than photographs of material artifacts and historic maps.

The series will certainly be available to researchers in major libraries, but unfortunately, the exorbitant price of the volumes ($235.00 each) means that the entire series as well as pertinent volumes of local interest will be out of the price range of many smaller libraries and most individuals. Moreover, readers will do well to keep in mind that these volumes contain selected documents and that, of necessity, much was omitted. A vast number of Colonial Office documents as well as voluminous documentary resources in other collections are not reproduced here, and French and Spanish records, while sparse for the period under consideration, do exist. Their inclusion here would have been welcomed, particularly Spanish records of contact with Creek and Seminole Indians along the Gulf Coast. Careful scholars will, of necessity, have to search for these records and consult the originals. Even so, researchers, students and interested readers will find this volume the most complete documentary resource to date for Indian affairs along the Gulf Coast, 1764-1776.

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John Lauritz Lawson. *Internal Improvement: National Public Works and the Promise of Popular Government in the Early United States.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001, 344 pp. $19.95. ISBN 0-8078-4911-1.

Historians like to point out that the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed in the same year that Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* was published, and to further explain that the former was a declaration of political liberty and the latter argued for economic liberty. Then, they often assert, the two liberties go hand-in-hand, and, furthermore, except for Alexander Hamilton, early leaders of the United States were in general agreement with this proposition.

Lawson shows, however, that this is a misreading of American history of the early national period. Not only were the Founding Fathers not a group of *laissez-faire* ideologues, who equated political freedom with a minimum of governmental activity in the economic realm, but rather many favored what came to be known as internal improvements funded by government, which at first included educational institutions, technological innovations, and improvements in transportation. Over time, as settlement expanded over the Appalachian Mountains, internal improvements came to be synonymous with state-sponsored public works that improved transportation, as there was a real concern, before the era of the railroad, that the transmontane states and territories might break away from the Union and establish a new country.

Among the Federalists, Washington and Adams as well as Hamilton favored internal improvements, as did Madison, Monroe, and John Quincy Adams among the Republicans. Internal improvements became a central tenet of the American System, as promoted by Henry Clay and supported by John C. Calhoun during his national period. Even Andrew Jackson found it politically expedient to support specific transportation projects which were important to his western supporters. In fact, as the table on page 191 clearly shows, annual federal expenditures for internal improvements averaged over 50 percent more during Jackson's two terms than Adams's one term ($2.39 million versus $1.56 million), though Adams was philosophically in favor of state-sponsored internal improvements, while Jackson was not.

The most consistent and vociferous opposition to internal improvements in the early national period came from what were called the Old Republicans, those who agreed with the Jefferson of the Kentucky Resolution of 1798. Clustered in Virginia and North

Carolina, the number of Old Republicans tended to diminish over time, though they remained a force to be reckoned with throughout this period. Lawson points out that North Carolina's opposition to internal improvements may have had as much to do with geography as ideology, since North Carolina, unlike either New York or Pennsylvania, had few potential rivers whose navigation could be substantially enhanced by such improvements.

The chief strength of this book is its detailed account of the winds of change that buffeted internal improvements as national policy. Lawson shows the difficulties that had to be overcome in developing a political coalition in favor of a comprehensive internal improvements bill and then how first the War of 1812 and then the economic panics of 1819 and 1837 and subsequent depressions, made financing internal improvements problematic at best. Not only does Lawson discuss the attitude of each president toward internal improvements, but his narrative details the debates in each Congress, so that the reader gets a real feel for the shifting sands upon which the political battles for and against internal improvements were fought.

The chief weakness of this book is that all but ignores internal improvements south of the southern border of North Carolina. Even granting that the South was largely an agrarian area producing agricultural staples, when compared to the industrializing North, there were attempts by coastal cities to improve their access to the hinterland by building canals. Brunswick, Georgia, promoted the Brunswick-Altamaha Canal (completed in 1854) which connected this port city to central Georgia by way of the Altamaha—Oconee—Ocmulgee river system. In northern Alabama, the first attempt to bypass Muscle Shoals on the Tennessee River was by canal. In both cases railroads made the canals obsolete. However, Charleston, South Carolina, largely sponsored the Charleston & Hamburg Railroad (completed in 1833) to gain access to a rich agricultural area that would otherwise have used Savannah, Georgia, as an entrepot. All of this is to say that the South had an interest in internal improvements along with the North, something Lawson all but ignores.

Surprisingly, it was not the federal government that built the most successful internal improvement of this period—the Erie Canal—but rather the state of New York. Not only was New York blessed with a topography that lent itself to a canal that was entirely within its borders, but also a governor in DeWitt Clinton who could master the technical, financial and political difficulties of such a large project and bring it to completion in October 1825. Almost immediately the Erie

Canal redrew the economic map of the United States in favor of New York City, making it the economic capital of the country. One unfortunate consequence of the great success of the Erie Canal was the expensive and ultimately futile attempts by other seaports to duplicate New York's good fortune. Other canals were built, some with federal aid, but most failed after only a few years and others were commenced and then abandoned before completion.

Looking back, the date July 4, 1828, can now be seen as an emblematic turning point in the history of transportation in the United States, for on that date two transportation projects were inaugurated. At Little Falls on the Potomac River, then president John Quincy Adams launched the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, which can be seen in hindsight as the disappointing culmination of the internal improvements movement as old as the Republic itself. Just forty miles away, ninety-year-old Charles Carroll of Carrollton, last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, broke ground for the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, an enterprise that would lead the way for an industry that would dominate American transportation for the next century. And, although the federal government and many states were generous, often very generous, with subsidies of all sorts, the railroads in almost all cases were built and operated by private corporations, ending the earlier dream of government-sponsored internal improvements.

Stephen J. Goldfarb Atlanta-Fulton Public Library

Michael V. R. Thomason, ed. *Mobile: The New History of Alabama's First City.* Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 2001, 464 pp. $45.00. ISBN 0-8173-1065-7.

As part of the commemoration of Mobile's tricentennial, Michael Thomason recruited a group of scholars to produce a history of the city. The resulting volume composed of ten essays written by ten Alabama historians is an impressive birthday present for the community and will probably remain the most significant work on the city's history for many years to come. Though a commemorative volume, it is not a hymn of praise for Mobile. Instead, it highlights the city's tragedies as well as its triumphs, its flaws and its merits. If anything, the overall tone of the work is a bit grim, for Mobile's saga is not one of unalloyed success. The hardships of the past have been manifold, and the prognosis for the city has not always been rosy.

Jay Higginbotham begins the volume with an essay on the European exploration and settlement of the region before the creation of the city on its present site in 1711. Then Richmond Brown follows with an account of the 101-year colonial period when France, Britain, and Spain successively ruled the small trading outpost. Though none of these nations wanted the settlement on Mobile Bay to fall in the hands of their rivals, none seemed to perceive much future greatness in the community. Plagued by a hot, humid climate conducive to disease and early death, Mobile did not lure many European settlers.

Not until after the American takeover in 1813 did Mobile assume the trappings of a city. Harriet Amos Doss admirably describes the "Cotton City" of 1813 to 1860. By 1850 Mobile was a major port city of almost twenty-one thousand inhabitants, ranking in population between Detroit and Milwaukee. It was second only to New Orleans as an exporter of cotton. The preeminent city of Alabama, Mobile was establishing itself as a major center of southern politics and culture.

The period from 1860 to 1900, however, marked a reversal in the city's fortunes. In two essays Henry McKiven Jr. and George Ewert describe the years of the Civil War and Reconstruction and the New South era of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. For Mobile the notion of the "New South" had little relevance. The boomtown of the 1830s and 1840s languished in the 1870s and 1880s, still shipping cotton but no longer attracting new wealth or residents. Whereas Birmingham in northern Alabama seemed to realize the dream of an industrialized, revitalized South, Mobile was a specter of the past, a vestige of the great age of antebellum cotton-induced prosperity. Municipal bankruptcy limited the city's capacity to upgrade its public infrastructure, and generally Mobile was acquiring a reputation as a has-been community.

During the first four decades of the twentieth century, Mobile made some headway as paper manufacturing and shipbuilding breathed new life into the local economy and the Alabama State Docks enhanced the city's port facilities. Christopher MacGregor Scribner and Billy Hinson discuss these decades, recounting the impact of World War I, the roaring twenties, and the great depression on the port city. Mobile's population rose from almost forty thousand in 1900 to sixty thousand in 1920, and then surpassed seventy thousand in the late 1930s. The city's rise was not meteoric, but its growth was encouraging to residents who remembered the stagnant years of the second half of the nineteenth century.

World War II, however, proved the city's greatest boon, transforming the languid Alabama port into a boomtown once again.

At the height of the wartime boom, local shipyards employed forty thousand workers and the army's Brookley Field provided thousands of additional jobs. In his essay on the war period Allen Cronenberg describes how rural Alabamians eager for good-paying jobs flocked into the city, creating a serious housing shortage and overtaxing the community's facilities. As blacks moved into jobs formerly reserved for whites, racial tensions also rose. Though it imposed hardships and spurred some conflict, the war generally benefitted the city. Whereas the Civil War reduced Mobile to poverty and stunted its growth, World War II restored a degree of prosperity not seen since the antebellum era.

Keith Nicholls discusses politics and civil rights in postwar Mobile, and in a separate essay Harvey Jackson III fills in the story of other developments from 1945 to the end of the twentieth century. Together they do an admirable job of bringing the reader up to date, offering a balanced survey of race relations, economic development, and community issues and conflicts during the half century following World War II. Mobile struggled with racial change and the closing of Brookley Field, but preservationists won some victories in the battle to save the city's historic landmarks.

Together the authors present a fine ensemble of three hundred years of local history. Numerous illustrations supplement the essays, and a nineteen-page bibliography should prove invaluable to anyone interested in Mobile's past. Moreover, a five-page chronology of key events in the city's history provides a useful reference for those seeking important names and dates. Though this volume is a collection of ten separately authored essays, the various pieces fit well with one another. There are few gaps or overlaps. One author picks up where the other leaves off, and for a composite work this book offers a surprisingly seamless narrative. Thomason and his colleagues have done a signal service to Mobile and its residents. Anyone interested in the city and its past should read their work.

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Maria von Blücher. *Maria von Blücher's Corpus Christi: Letters from the South Texas Frontier, 1849-1879.* Edited and annotated by Bruce S. Cheeseman. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002, 352 pp. $29.95. ISBN 1-58544-135-X.

Between 1849 and 1879, Maria von Blücher sent over two hundred letters from Corpus Christi, Texas, to her parents in Germany, and her correspondence provides a richly textured description of daily life in nineteenth-century Texas. *Maria von Blücher's Corpus Christi*, skillfully edited by Bruce S. Cheeseman, makes this valuable collection of primary sources available in a single volume. Cheeseman selected nearly 120 letters and a dozen family photographs, and organized them into six chronological chapters, each of which begins with several pages of informative commentary. The collection starts with two short chapters describing Maria and Felix von Blücher's departure from Germany and their voyage across the Atlantic, but the remaining letters chronicle the family's experiences in Gulf Coast Texas from the 1850s to the 1870s. Maria von Blücher emerges as an intelligent, resourceful, and independent woman who made a life for herself and her children in Corpus Christi despite a deeply troubled marriage and the considerable challenges of frontier-era and Civil War Texas. A variety of readers, particularly those interested in women's history, immigration history, and nineteenth-century Texas, should find the detailed letters of this educated German woman to be engrossing reading.

Maria von Blücher's goal was to describe her experiences to her parents, not to write a history of early Texas, and the main value of her correspondence is the window it provides into everyday life. Blücher gives expression to her personal experiences as a wife and mother, and she comments on American society from her perspective as a German immigrant. Maria and Felix von Blücher were young, well-educated newlyweds when they sailed to Corpus Christi, and they left behind a world of wealth and culture to build a new life in Texas. The early letters depict Felix von Blücher as a romantic adventurer, and suggest that his travels as a surveyor and land agent will bring wealth to the growing family. But over time, the letters reveal that his extended absences were an abandonment of his wife and five children, and that he drank heavily and contributed little money to the family. Maria von Blücher experienced feelings of loneliness, isolation, and depression, and she needed financial support from relatives, but she never left her husband. Instead, she gradually became

an independent woman who supported and managed a large household by giving music lessons. Despite periods of poverty, she clung to her self-image as a woman of elite status, and her comments about the black, Mexican, and German servants she employed offer insights into her ideas about race and class. Maria von Blücher's ongoing marital problems, her economic struggles, and her adaptation to life in Texas are recurring themes that turn this series of letters into a surprisingly compelling drama.

Blücher focused on her household and local community, and paid little attention to political, military, and diplomatic events, but her letters yield many insights into the economic development of Gulf Coast Texas from 1850 to 1880. The correspondence reveals that this was a maritime age, and that early Corpus Christi had closer links with distant seaports such as New Orleans, New York, and Hamburg than with other Texas cities. Ships regularly brought manufactured goods from Europe to Corpus Christi, and the Blüchers of Texas received many letters and packages from their relatives in Germany. Felix von Blücher used his education to work on the Texas frontier as a surveyor, land agent, mapmaker, and interpreter, and he acquired a large amount of South Texas land, but was never able to sell it for its full value. During these three decades, the economic prospects of Gulf Coast Texas waxed and waned as agriculture and livestock exports, especially cattle, hides, wool, and cotton, went through boom and bust cycles. Corpus Christi was a frontier outpost when the Blüchers arrived in 1849, and the remote seaport's growth was slow, in part because of the threats posed by conflicts with Mexico, yellow fever, and hurricanes. Only at the end of the correspondence did Corpus Christi begin to boom, as a deeper harbor and railroad connections lessened the city's isolation and brought increased prosperity.

Cheeseman's commentaries are generally excellent, but he might have provided more information about the Blücher family after 1879. Maria von Blücher's last letter was written in 1879 because her mother died in that year, but she lived until 1893, when she died in Corpus Christi at the age of sixty-six. This intriguing family drama ends rather abruptly, and readers would appreciate more research into Blücher's final years, and into the lives of her children. Additional material on the colorful and varied career of Felix von Blücher, including his Confederate military service, could also enhance this work. Despite chapters titled "Civil War" and "Reconstruction and Redemption," there is little discussion of slavery, the war's progress, southern politics, or race relations. Blücher's letters describe her

economic hardships on the Confederate home front and her dedication to protecting her home, while devoting little space to larger events, but this is how she saw the world. From beginning to end, this is Maria von Blücher's narrative, capably presented by editor Bruce Cheeseman, and it is a rich and compelling story of an immigrant woman's adaptations to life in nineteenth-century Texas.

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Robert S. Weddle. *The Wreck of the* Belle, *the Ruin of La Salle*. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 2001, xvii + 327 pp. $29.95. ISBN 1-58544-121-X.

The latest book by renowned Texas historian Robert S. Weddle describes in fascinating detail the adventures and misadventures of Robert Cavelier de La Salle, the eighteenth-century North American explorer. Prompted by the 1995 discovery of La Salle's vessel *La Belle* in Matagorda Bay, Texas, and its subsequent excavation by State of Texas archaeologists, this volume relates the background of one of the most ambitious and ultimately disastrous colonization attempts in American history. Weddle's research and attention to detail is impeccable, while his enjoyable writing style makes what could have been a dry historical tome read like a factual, yet entertaining novel. Events described in the book certainly would not be too outlandish for a work of fiction.

In biographical fashion, Weddle leads the reader through the major events of La Salle's life, from his childhood in France through his education by Jesuits to his decision to renounce a life in the Church in order to pursue fortune through trapping and trading in French North America. La Salle's voyages of discovery on northern rivers and down the Mississippi, as well as his attempts to secure wealth and establish trading outposts, are related as crucial elements that led to the 1686 colonization attempt. Weddle takes great care to describe the explorer's complex personality including tendencies toward denial and self-aggrandizement, egomania, poor decision-making and personnel management skills, and plain bad luck. All of these shortcomings combined with La Salle's talent for persuasion and charismatic leadership led to tragedy for his colony, which was not even in the right place. La Salle's story, as presented by Weddle, is an anthology of disaster and a fascinating study of the processes of colonization

(although, regrettably, little information about the colonists themselves is provided). As Weddle states, "He lacked both knowledge and skills for outfitting an overseas voyage with multiple objectives and a colony in an unknown land, completely out of reach of the nearest outpost of civilization." It is almost painful to read of the resulting catastrophe.

La Salle's efforts in North America were plagued by shipwreck, along with other obstacles such as betrayal, deceit, and attempts on his life. Events surrounding the wrecking of *La Belle* are pieced together from the ship's log and survivor's accounts, in addition to reports by Spanish sailors who saw the sunken derelict a year later. Although the wreck may be considered to have been the final straw in the destruction of La Salle's plans (with the exception of his subsequent murder at the hands of his own men), contrary to the book's title it was not the cause of La Salle's ruin but, as Weddle contends, it was the result.

The wrecked ship was the death knell for La Salle's colony, but it has provided a wealth of information to modern archaeologists. Millions of artifacts, as well as remains of the ship itself, have been recovered and currently are being conserved and analyzed in preparation for the final publication of results. Although the press release from Texas A&M University Press for *The Wreck of the* Belle, *the Ruin of La Salle* suggests the book contains information from archaeological evidence, this does not seem to be the case. Weddle is very clear that his sources are historical in nature and he states in the introduction that his volume, the first of several to come, focuses on the historical setting of La Salle's venture; the archaeological report will be published later. Although archaeological information could only have added to Weddle's work, this book provides an essential background for the rest of the story that will be told through study of material from the shipwreck excavation.

The book suffers slightly from a lack of color images and a general impression that illustrations were reproduced at less than highest quality. In addition, there are proofreading and typographical errors that are somewhat distracting. Aside from these minor criticisms, the work is an important addition to colonial American scholarship. The volume is richly bound, printed on quality paper, and beautifully presented with a handsome jacket. The modest price for a hard-back book makes it affordable and desirable for students and the general public. The content makes it a must-have for historians, scholars, and anyone interested in the colonial history of the United States in general and the Gulf South in particular.

Della Scott-Ireton Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research

Cameron B. Wesson and Mark A. Rees, eds. *Between Contacts and Colonies: Archaeological Perspectives on the Protohistoric Southeast.* Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2002, 344 pp. $29.95. ISBN 0-8173-1167-X.

This volume grew out of the papers presented at the 1997 symposium, "Protohistory and Archaeology: Interdisciplinary Research," held at the Fifty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. *Between Contacts and Colonies* presents ten chapters based on symposium papers that explore a wide range of topics. The introductory chapter contributed by the volume's co-editors, Cameron Wesson and Mark Rees, provides an overview of the important themes, theoretical models, and guiding generalizations that characterize archaeological research on the protohistoric period in the Southeast. In Chapter 2, Kristen Gremillion marshals paleobotanical data to study the dynamics of ecological change resulting from the early contacts between native and European cultures. In Chapter 3, Rebecca Saunders uses archaeological and historical data from the early settlement period to explore the effects of cross-cultural contact along the lower Atlantic coast. An essay by Timothy Perttula on the protohistory of the Caddoan culture region is presented in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, Christopher Rodning describes how archaeologists used the writings of the eighteenth-century traveler William Bartram to explore the historic Cherokee presence in the Little Tennessee River Valley. David Hally employs archaeological and documentary evidence to examine Native American house types in Chapter 6. In Chapter 7, Cameron Wesson challenges the widely held notion that the protohistoric period was a kind of "dark ages" for Native American cultures. David Dye's essay on the changing nature of warfare in protohistoric Mississippian societies is presented in Chapter 8. In Chapter 9, John Scarry and Mincry Maxham consider the creation of elite social identities and social interaction with European explorers and colonists. The final chapter, by Mark Rees, examines native polities in the Central Mississippi Valley during the late prehistoric and early protohistoric.

All of the contributed papers are worth reading and some are quite thought provoking. The authors summarize important themes that characterize protohistoric research and reflect important trends in southeastern archaeology, including the growing interest in the development of tribal societies after contact with Europeans, a continuing anthropological interest in the modeling of cultural

processes, and the florescence of ethnohistory and other interdisciplinary approaches to regional culture history. Wesson, Rees, and their colleagues consider the protohistoric as both a regional sequence and a cultural pattern, and while each of the contributors freely expresses his or her own theoretical and methodological orientation, the essays share a cultural-historical perspective. The chapters are well integrated and Southeastern archaeologists, both prehistoric and historic, will find much that is interesting, fresh, and rewarding.

While focused on a regional synthesis of archaeological research, all of the chapters have been made accessible to a larger scholarly audience, including colonial period historians, by the emphasis on historic context and documentary sources. Indeed, it is fair to say that some of the interpretations and insights go beyond archaeology and anthropology. However, historians and lay readers will need to be patient in navigating through a veritable sea of archaeological jargon as well as some rather arcane anthropological concepts.

This reviewer was mildly disappointed at finding so few citations from the growing body of scholarly literature on the early history of the Southeast that has been generated by contemporary historians–this was somewhat surprising, given the authors' abiding emphasis on using historians' data and interpretations in their own archaeological research. Notwithstanding, the book is abundantly referenced (the bibliography runs to a robust sixty pages) and includes thirty-four helpful maps and other illustrations. A more expansive index would have been appreciated in a volume with so many overlapping topics.

The editors and the University of Alabama Press should be commended for producing an attractive and useful volume that will undoubtedly be a frequently consulted and cited source for archeologists. *Between Contacts and Colonies* also provides food for thought for other researchers interested in the history of the contact period in the Southeast.

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Laurie A. Wilkie. *Creating Freedom: Material Culture and African American Identity at Oakley Plantation, Louisiana, 1840-1950.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000, xxv + 294 pp. Cloth, $69.95, ISBN 0-8071-2582-2. Paper, $24.95, ISBN 0-8071-2648-9.

Researching and interpreting the history and experiences of marginalized groups poses unique challenges for scholars. Traditional written sources either exclude or provide only a biased view of ordinary men and women. Archeology, oral history, structures, artifacts, and photographs are useful tools in giving a "voice to the voiceless," as Laurie Wilkie does in *Creating Freedom: Material Culture and African American Identity at Oakley Plantation, Louisiana, 1840-1950.* The author, who is an anthropologist, uses such non-traditional sources to study the lives of four African-American families: one slave (the Gardiners) and three free (two generations of the Freemans and the Scotts) who lived at Oakley Plantation in West Feliciana Parish. According to Wilkie, she is hoping to demonstrate how "these families created and presented themselves in different household and community contexts" so that "we can achieve a more balanced and humanized understanding of the African American experience in rural Louisiana."

The basis for this study is Wilkie's two-year excavation at Oakley Plantation. What was known about Oakley prior to the dig was largely drawn from European American sources. Wilkie, by combining the findings of the excavation along with other non-traditional sources, provides a deeper and more comprehensive view of Oakley's past. She sets her interpretation of the site against the traditional white world, which provided the backdrop for Oakley's white and African-American inhabitants. In so doing, she provides a new interpretation of life at Oakley based on her research. She also examines the construction of identity within the lives of the four families, a far more difficult task, given the types of available evidence. Since the white and African-American families essentially lived cheek-by-jowl, it becomes more problematic in trying to determine the contours of identity. Artifact evidence is helpful only to a point, especially since many of the items used by the African Americans came to them from Oakley's owners, the Mathews family, particularly prior to emancipation. The oral history evidence, most of which comes from the WPA slave narratives and interviews with people who knew the families in question, is useful, especially when augmented by other sources.

Wilkie begins her story of Oakley plantation and its African-American inhabitants by first looking at the history of West Feliciana

Parish. She discusses the specific history of Oakley, including the lives of the Mathews family, from its modest origin as a small farm to a large multi-faceted operation, housing many slaves (a kind of Tara on the bayou). Cotton was the major crop, even after the end of the Civil War, when Oakley's owners turned it into a sharecropping operation. One interesting facet of the site's ownership is that after the Civil War, women managed Oakley. This set Oakley apart, as Wilkie notes, "two spinster sisters running a plantation of black tenants without a white male living permanently with them, were very unusual and in the eyes of their contemporaries, suspect." The author suggests that the presence of women managers may have made Oakley a better place to live and work for the African-American tenants than other similar contemporary properties.

Following an account of the excavation at Oakley that Wilkie completed in the early 1990s, she uses the information to interpret the lives of Oakley's residents. Noting that people shape their identities in various ways, depending on their relationships and situations, Wilkie believes that the African Americans at Oakley shaped their identity using two conflicting sources: the African traditions passed down through the generations and the influence of the white family. She then examines the creation of identity within the African-American households, where the African and planter influences manifested themselves in various ways. For the African-American children, not all of their experiences were the result of white influence. Indeed, practices within their own household, many of which were grounded in African tradition, played a major role as the children matured into adults. Wilkie states, "In particular, through a strong sense of spirituality, African-American families were able to maintain dissimilar attitudes and traditions in the face of planter interference."

The author views home and family as one of the most important places where African traditions and rituals expressed themselves. This was especially true in the realm of medicine, where the African-American families implemented "an ethnomedical system distinct from that of European Americans." Wilkie utilizes both the archeological and oral history evidence to prove her point about the significance and relevance of traditional African healing methods to Oakley's African-American families. As she also notes, the medical traditions were closely tied with the spirituality of these families, which played a central role in their lives. The post bellum plantation experience, according to Wilkie, was pivotal in reviving the old African traditions.

How the African-American and planter families related to each other in the setting of the plantation is also an important part of the story of Oakley. Divisions existed within the African-American community depending on what kind of job each person held. Domestic servants, who lived in the closest proximity to the planter family, were the most affected by the personas created by the rest of the African Americans. They had to work hard to "fit in," especially after the end of slavery. Wilkie also provides an enlightening discussion of racism and the ways the African-American community at Oakley strove to deal with discrimination in every day life. The public personas they created helped them cope with bigotry.

Wilkie's work on Oakley is a valuable contribution to the study of African-American history and identity. By combining archeology, material culture, oral history and other more traditional sources, she is able to offer a richer and fuller story of one plantation and the families who inhabited the site. She provides a full bibliography, although I noticed the omission of the work on material culture done by Thomas Schlereth and Henry Glassie. Both of these scholars have contributed much to promoting the use of material culture to help us interpret the lives of people who leave little else behind. I also question her mention of the Louisiana WPA ex-slave narratives, which she states were "collected in the mid-1940s." The Federal Writers Project of the WPA, which collected the slave narratives, ended the project in 1939 and the WPA itself ended during World War II. These criticisms do not undermine the essential worth of *Creating Freedom*. Wilkie has gone a long way toward the interpretation of African-American life and identity both before and after the Civil War.

Donna M. DeBlasio Youngstown State University

# From the Archives . . .
# A Letter from Marengo County, Alabama

Henry M. McKiven

## Introduction

William Dowling may have come to Mobile from Ireland via New Orleans. He married Rosa Ryan on July 30, 1857 (at Spring Hill College, according to the family). His family gave the following letter to the University of South Alabama Archives. There was no other correspondence with it. Nonetheless, it is a fascinating view of Reconstruction from a perspective not often recorded.

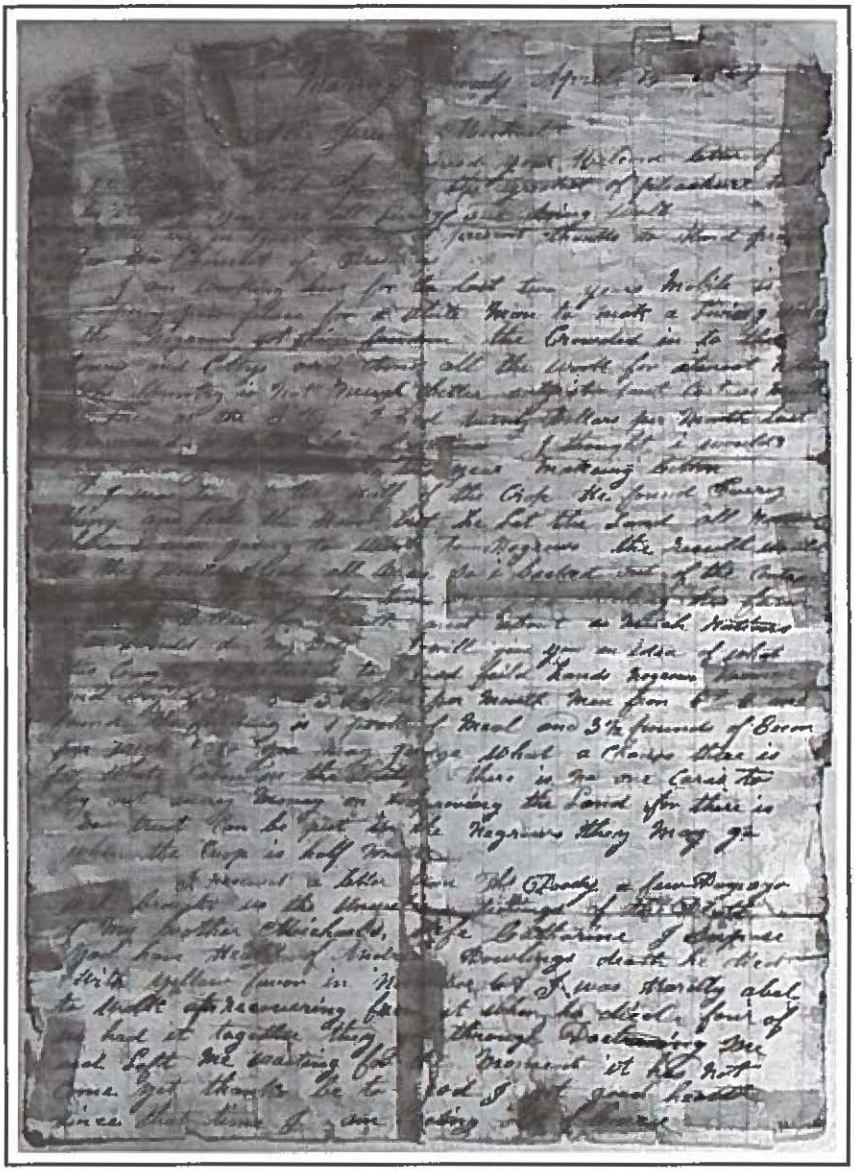
## Transcription[1]

Maringo County April 13th 1869
Dear Friend Michael[2]

I received you welcom letter of 26 of March wich gave us the greatest of pleashure to hear by it that you are all Living and doing well. We are in good health at present thanks to kind providence for his choiseest of Blessings.

I am working hear for the last two years to mak a Living since the negrows got their freedom the Crowded in to the towns and Citys and done all the work for almost nothing. The Country is not much better only it don't Cost as much to Live as the citty. I had twenty Dollars per month last year and a good share of rations. I thought I would try what I could make this year makeing cotton. I was to get the half of the Crop. He found Every thing and fed the Horse but he let the Land all round where I was going to work to Negrows. The result would be they would steal all mine so I backed out of the contract and I am working for him this year ditching his farm. I get 25 Dollars per month and about as much rations as would da my self. I will give you an idea of what this country is reduced to. Good field hands, Negrows, Wemon and boys from 3 to 5 Dollars per month, Men from 6-8, and found the finding is 1 peck of meal and 3 ½ pounds of Becon per week. So you may judge what a chance there is for white Labor in the South. There is no one cares to lay out anny money on improving the Land for there is no trust can be put in the Negrows. They may go when the Crop is half made.

I reseved a letter from Ths Doody a few Days ago wich brought us the unwelcom tidings of the Death of my brother Michaels wife



*William Dowling's Letter (front).* University of South Alabama Archives.

Catharine. I suppose you have heard of Andrew Dowlings death. He died with yellow fevor in November 67. I was Hardly abel to walk after recovering from it when he died. Four of us had it together. They got through Doctoring me and left me waiting for the moment. It has not come yet thanks be to God. I got good health since that time. I am geting old of Course.[3]

I was determined to go north last fall but I could not get a setelment from the man I worked for until Janawary. I would not care if I was out of [...] there is no showing for a man to live amongst the free Negros. You cannot have a chicken or garden spot or anny thing that you cannot bring in to the cabbin.

I will try to go next fall if God spares me life and health. I could not venture to take the children when the winter would set in. They are prety Hardy only the youngest he is only three years old, another Michael.

I will be thankfull if ever I get into the White Mans Country once more before I am Called on to pay the Common debt of Nature. If this should reach your hands rite me a letter as soon as you can and let me know what you and Patrick is working at and how is the time in that places. Also let me know of Sister Julia is geting any suport from the Goverment for the loss of her Husband. I was truly sorry to hear of poor Farnan meeting with so suden a Death. Such you see is the ways of Providence. To day in good Health and Joyes and tomora in veiw of the Grave. May his soul rest in pace.

It would would be useless for me to try to tell you all my little misfortuns since the begining of the war. I had a good house and lot in Mobile the first year of the war that was sold an spent in a little short time. Then I was Compeled to go soilgering.[4] When the war was over I leased a lot on Adam Street and built a snug little House on it. The Negros squatted round me so thick I had to sell it to one of them for 245 Dollars which did not near build it. When I recovered from the yellow favor all was gone and I took they Country. We had six children. Three is dead and three living. Katy 11 years, Magg 9, Michael 3. Now Dear Michael rite as soon as you get this and let us know all partichlars. Rosa joins me in sending our Best respects and Love to you all.

Nomore at present from your Affectinate Freind and Brother William Dowling. Send me word ho many Children has my Broth Thomas living.

Dirict B. D. Rogers, Manns Landing Bigbe River, Maringo Co Ala for William Dowling.[5]

## Commentary

With few exceptions writing about Irish migration to Mobile during the Irish famine of the 1840s and 1850s assumes a fairly easy integration of Irish nationals into "white" Mobile society. To be sure, historians note various struggles, but generally the story becomes part of the larger story of "white" ethnics fleeing the poverty and oppression of the "old world" in search of freedom and opportunity in the "new." Irish migrants who arrived in the South were particularly blessed by the existence of a system of slavery that conferred privileges and immunities on "whites" not offered to their less fortunate countrymen in northern cities.

In reality, the Irish men and women who made their way to Mobile encountered a society and culture that largely viewed them with suspicion, to say the least. Irish immigrants usually arrived in miserable condition and possessed few skills useful in the expanding economy of the city. As in other U.S. cities, Mobile considered the Irish brand of Catholicism excessively subservient to Rome. Even Catholic natives of Mobile derided the practices of their Gaelic co-religionists. At a time of great interest in classifying the "races of mankind," many in Mobile considered the failure of the Irish to thrive in their own world and their "slavish" obedience to Rome as evidence of the inferiority of their "race." On the continuum of civilization, the Irish fell somewhere near African-American slaves. Irish immigrants were not, in other words, readily accepted as "whites."

So they struggled for jobs and integration into "white" society in Mobile. First they had to find jobs, a task made more difficult by the existence of slavery. Slaves, whose owners received rental payments from employers, and free African Americans dominated unskilled work along the waterfront and elsewhere in the city, and these were the jobs the Irish wanted. In challenging African-American control of unskilled work in the city, Irish immigrants faced resistance from slaveowners, who derived a handsome profit from slave hiring, and other "white" native defenders of free black workers in the city. There were certainly few who defended the Irish as "white men." Indeed, many in the city considered the Irish worker far less desirable than African Americans.

But circumstances, politically and economically, favored the Irish, and, of course, they were not of African origin. Democrats in Mobile in the early 1850s reached out to the Irish as they sought to establish themselves as the city's majority party. Defining Irish immigrants as "white men," Democratic politicians elevated Irish immigrants to an

equal status with natives. Others in the city opposed this extension of political rights through the Know-Nothing party. The Know-Nothings called for the creation of a second-class citizenship status for twenty-one years for recent immigrants. They were attempting to deprive Democrats of the votes they needed to achieve their political goals, including the expansive definition of "white supremacy" that had become a key component of the Democratic appeal. The failure of the Know-Nothing movement established the Irish as full members of the political community.

The political gains of Irish men provided a boost to their struggle for jobs in the city, particularly on the waterfront. But political influence alone does not explain the success of Irish workers. A key development favoring the Irish was a change in the labor market. With slave prices rising, making the slave rental market tighter, Irish workers became more attractive to employers. Democrats in government helped this process along by imposing restrictions on the mobility of free blacks and by restricting the ability of slave workers to live independently. Under the circumstances, employers along the waterfront, particularly those looking for unskilled labor looked to the Irish population. By the outbreak of the Civil War, work on the docks had become identified with the Irish, or, more importantly, "white" men.

This brings us to the document under consideration. William Dowling complained about the influx of blacks into the city during Reconstruction and the deleterious effect on the labor market (for "white" men anyway). Evidence such as this may contribute to an emerging understanding of labor relations during the period that places more emphasis on market forces, while altering how we understand the influence of race and class in hiring decisions. Prevailing historical interpretations hold that employers preferred white labor but held black labor in reserve in order to depress wages and defend against labor organizations. Judging from this document, and other evidence from the era, the emancipation of slaves, and the actions of the Freedmen's Bureau, freed the labor market from restrictions designed to protect "white" workers, allowing "black" workers to make gains. Employers, in other words, did what employers do and hired the cheapest workers they could find who could get the job done. Dowling responded to this loss of privilege by leaving town, but, as he vividly describes, did not find conditions in the countryside much better. Others built political and economic organizations to press the struggle to restore "white" control of the labor market. In time "white" workers would play

prominent roles in the reconstruction of social, political, and economic impediments to the operation of a free market for labor, and "black" workers would be the losers. In the meantime, people like William Dowling and his family had a hard "row to hoe" indeed.

## Notes

[1] The transcriber, Elisa Baldwin, has provided punctuation necessary for clarity but has preserved the original spelling.

[2] The 1870 census records indicate that William Dowling's older brother Michael was a farmer living in North Mobile County, age 64, with four children and three African-American laborers in his household.

[3] Thomas Doody, also from Ireland, was Michael Dowling's neighbor in North Mobile County in 1870.

[4] William Dowling served in the Light Artillery, 2d Battalion, Company A, during the war. Janet B. Hewett, ed., *Alabama Confederate Soldiers, 1861-1865* (Wilmington, NC, 1999).

[5] William Dowling apparently directed B. D. Rogers to send or deliver the letter to his brother Michael. Mann's Landing was located ca. 174 miles above Mobile on the Tombigbee River.

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