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The Presidents and the Planet
Climate Change Science and Politics from Eisenhower to Bush

JAY HAKES

“An indispensable political history of climate change from a veteran White House hand that is deeply researched, comprehensively detailed, nimbly written, and animated by new discoveries and inside dirt. As haunting as it is revelatory.”—Nathaniel Rich, author of Losing Earth: A Recent History

“Jay Hakes’s The Presidents and the Planet is a noble and groundbreaking deep dive into how eight U.S. presidents, from Eisenhower to Bush 41, grappled with various alarming reports about how CO$_2$ emissions generated by the overuse of fossil fuels were heating the earth’s atmosphere. Hakes combs through reams of primary source documents and reveals that Charles David Keeling, Roger Revelle, and Wallace Broecker were spot-on in their science-based global warming predictions. With climate change the greatest challenge of the twenty-first century, this sober-minded environmental history couldn’t be timelier.”—Douglas Brinkley, author of Silent Spring Revolution: John F. Kennedy, Rachel Carson, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and the Great Environmental Awakening

“With The Presidents and the Planet, Hakes, a preeminent historian of federal energy initiatives, has turned his gaze to climate science and policy. This book is a definitive chronicle of how twentieth-century American presidents learned about the greenhouse effect and ignored the problem for far too long. An essential read on climate change.”—Leah Cardamore Stokes, author of Short Circuiting Policy: Interest Groups and the Battle over Clean Energy and Climate Policy in the American States

“Hakes tells the long-neglected and critically important story of how climate change first moved from scientific experiments to Washington, D.C. The Presidents and the Planet is a well-paced and readable account of scientists, economists, and politicians feeling their way forward. You’ll see why Charles David Keeling, Roger Revelle, and James Hansen should be household names along with Galileo and Einstein.”—Jonathan Alter, author of His Very Best: Jimmy Carter, a Life

JAY HAKES headed the U.S. Energy Information Administration for seven years and the Carter Presidential Library for thirteen. He is the author of two previous books on the intersections among energy, the environment, the economy, and politics.
Behold the mystique of the New Orleans night—that tinge of excitement, that veil of mystery, that sense of danger that emerges during “the witching hour.”

Darkness may unleash the Dionysian in the Crescent City, but the nightly sparkle of illumination also showcases its ethereal and enduring beauty. Through hundreds of nighttime photographs taken in the streets and from the air, *Nocturnal New Orleans* captures this mythological magic—even as it argues that the mystique is neither mythical nor magical, but stems from a rational awareness rooted in history, geography, economics, and culture.

With photographs by Marco Rasi and text by Richard Campanella, *Nocturnal New Orleans* heralds the jewel-like beauty of the Crescent City in darkness. Its stunning photographs demonstrate that the city’s allure is not merely construed or illusionary; rather, it was born among transients in a diverse port city, at the nexus of a vast hinterland and a global foreland, where anonymity intersected with desire and opportunity. It began over three centuries ago, and it will continue this very evening, after nightfall, during the witching hour.

**MARCO RASI** earned a PhD in civil engineering from the California Institute of Technology. He is a certified commercial drone pilot and expert in drone-mounted cameras. His photography has also appeared in *Above New Orleans*. He lives in New Orleans with his wife Jane, and has three grown-up children.

**RICHARD CAMPANELLA**, a geographer and associate dean for research at the Tulane University School of Architecture, is the author of fourteen books, including *Draining New Orleans* and *Bourbon Street: A History*, as well as hundreds of articles on Louisiana history, geography, architecture, and culture. In 2019 he received the Louisiana Writer Award from the Louisiana Center for the Book. He lives in New Orleans with his wife Marina and son Jason.
Almost lost to history, the Roffignac has long been one of New Orleans’s most mysterious cocktails. While drinks such as the Sazerac and the Ramos gin fizz enjoyed a resurgence in popularity during the craft cocktail movement of the early twenty-first century, resurrecting the Roffignac has proved a more difficult task.

Named for nineteenth-century New Orleans mayor Joseph Roffignac, the whiskey-based drink became one of the city’s most celebrated libations by the 1890s. After Prohibition, however, its place in Crescent City drinking culture never quite recovered. It remained the house cocktail at Maylie’s Restaurant until its owners shuttered the establishment in 1983. By then, the Roffignac had fallen into relative obscurity.

The renewed interest in craft spirits in the 2010s saw bartenders and spirits enthusiasts across the country creating their own versions of the Roffignac. Many tried to trace its roots back through the years and uncover early recipes for the drink, and some perpetuated fanciful accounts related to its name, origins, and original ingredients.

Robert F. Moss separates truth from fiction and offers the definitive story of this classic pre-Prohibition creation. *The Roffignac* explains for the first time how this once-famous elixir fell out of favor before being rediscovered by mixologists and connoisseurs. It also surveys dining and drinking in nineteenth-century New Orleans and explores how twentieth- and twenty-first-century conceptions of the city have shaped our views of the drink and its history. As Moss shares this remarkable and rather twisted tale, he highlights the central role that narrative, myth, and legend have played in American cocktail culture, and how unreliable those stories can sometimes be.

Robert F. Moss writes about food, drink, and travel. Based in Charleston, South Carolina, he is the contributing barbecue editor for *Southern Living* and restaurant critic for the *Charleston Post & Courier*. He is the author of *The Lost Southern Chefs: A History of Commercial Dining in the Nineteenth-Century South* and *Barbecue: The History of an American Institution*, among other books.
The Creole praline arrived in New Orleans with the migration of formerly enslaved people fleeing Louisiana plantations after the Civil War. Black women street vendors made a livelihood by selling a range of homemade foods, including pralines, to Black dockworkers and passersby. The praline offered a path to financial independence, and even its ingredients spoke of a history of Black ingenuity: an enslaved horticulturist played a key role in domesticating the pecan and creating the grafted tree that would form the basis of Louisiana’s pecan orchards.

By the 1880s, however, white New Orleans writers such as Grace King and Henry Castellanos had begun to recast the history of the praline in a nostalgic mode that harkened back to the prewar South. In their telling, the praline was brought to New Orleans by an aristocratic refugee of the French Revolution. Black street vendors were depicted not as innovative entrepreneurs but as loyal servants still faithful to their former enslavers. The rise of cultivated, shelled, and cheaply bought pecans—as opposed to the foraged pecans that early praline sellers had depended on—allowed better-resourced white women to move into the praline-selling market, especially as tourism emerged as a key New Orleans industry after the 1910s.

Indeed, the praline became central to the marketing of New Orleans. Conventions often hired Black women to play the “praline mammy” role for out-of-towners, while stores sold pralines with mammy imagery, in boxes designed to look like cotton bales. After World War II, pralines went national with items like praline-flavored ice cream (1950s) and praline liqueur (1980s). Yet as the civil rights struggle persisted, the imagery of the praline mammy was recognized as an offensive caricature.

As it uncovers the history of a sweet dessert made of sugar and pecans, New Orleans Pralines tells a fascinating story of Black entrepreneurship, toxic white nostalgia, and the rise of tourism in the Crescent City.

ANTHONY J. STANONIS is a New Orleans native and independent historian. He received his BA in history from Loyola University New Orleans and his MA and PhD in history from Vanderbilt University. His publications concentrate on tourism, foodways, and culture in the American South.
Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1803–1840
A Creole Community on the American Frontier
KATHLEEN M. BYRD

“A much-needed narrative of Natchitoches and its surroundings in the immediate decades after the Louisiana Purchase. Byrd deftly shows this was no insignificant outpost, but one at the complex crossroads of political, national, economic, and cultural identities, alliances, and whims—with the future of the area, Louisiana, and the United States up for grabs.”—Kent W. Peacock, director, Creole Heritage Center, Northwestern State University of Louisiana

“A unique synthesis, both social and material, drawing on a wide range of hard-to-find primary data. This new regional narrative will be indispensable to all those who research Louisiana’s historic past.”—Kevin C. MacDonald, director, Institute of Archaeology, University College London

“In 1803, the Natchitoches region abruptly became part of the rapidly expanding Anglo-American world. The period that followed saw immense cultural change, and the Latin-dominated town of Natchitoches became an American border town. This period saw changes in the diverse cultures of the Red River region, including expansion into Texas, and reflects the complex nature of frontier history. Byrd has captured this complexity and leaves us with a broader perspective of American culture.”—Hiram F. “Pete” Gregory, professor of anthropology at Northwestern State University of Louisiana

Kathleen M. Byrd’s Natchitoches, Louisiana, 1803–1840 is an examination of one French Creole community as it transitioned from a fur-trading and agricultural settlement under the control of Spain to a critical American outpost on the Spanish/American frontier and finally to a commercial hub and jumping-off point for those heading west. Byrd focuses on historic events in the area and the long-term French Creole residents as they adapted to the American presence. She also examines the effect of the arrival of the Americans, with their Indian trading house and Indian agency, on Native groups and considers how members of the enslaved population took advantage of opportunities for escape presented by a new international border. Byrd shows how the arrival of Americans forever changed Natchitoches, transforming it from a sleepy frontier settlement into a regional commercial center and staging point for pioneers heading into Texas.

Until her retirement, KATHLEEN M. BYRD was the director of the School of Social Sciences at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches. She has also served as the state archaeologist for Louisiana.
Spanish Louisiana
Contest for Borderlands, 1763–1803
FRANCES KOLB TURNBELL

Frances Kolb Turnbell’s study of Spanish colonial Louisiana is the first comprehensive history of the colony. It emphasizes the Lower Mississippi Valley’s status as a borderland contested by empires and the region’s diverse inhabitants in the era of volatility that followed the Seven Years’ War. As Turnbell demonstrates, the Spanish era was characterized by tremendous transition as the colony emerged from the neglect of the French period and became slowly but increasingly centered on plantation agriculture. The transformations of this critical period grew out of the struggles between Spain and Louisiana’s colonists, enslaved people, and Indians over issues related to space and mobility. Many borderland peoples, networks, and alliances sought to preserve Louisiana as a flexible and fluid zone as the colonial government attempted to control and contain the region’s inhabitants for its own purposes through policy and efforts to secure loyalty and its own advantageous alliances.

Turnbell first examines the period from 1763 through the American Revolution, when the Mississippi River was a boundary between empires. The river’s designation as an imperial border ran counter to the topography of North America and counter to the practices of the valley’s inhabitants, who employed its waterways to trade, communicate, migrate, and survive. Turnbell pays special attention to the Revolt of 1768, the burgeoning trade along the Mississippi prior to the American Revolution that involved British and American merchants, Spanish preparation for war, and the crucial involvement of the borderland’s diverse inhabitants as the war played out on the Lower Mississippi.

Turnbell then explains how the activity of borderland peoples evolved after the Revolutionary War when the Lower Mississippi was no longer an imperial boundary. She considers the instability and fluidity of postwar years in Louisiana, American trade and migration, Louisiana’s experience of the Age of Revolutions—from pro-French sentiments to plans for rebellion among the enslaved—and ultimately, Spain’s political demise in the Mississippi River valley.

FRANCES KOLB TURNBELL teaches history at the University of North Alabama and is editor of the Tennessee Historical Quarterly.

ALSO OF INTEREST
978-0-8071-7489-0
Hardcover $40.00s
The Beechers
America’s Most Influential Family

OBBIETYLER TODD

“The Reverend Lyman Beecher was once called “the father of more brains than any other man in America.” Among his eleven living children were a celebrity novelist, a college president, the most well-known preacher in America, a suffragist, a radical abolitionist, a pioneer in women’s education, and the founder of home economics. Rejecting many of their father’s Puritan beliefs, the deeply religious Beechers nevertheless embraced his quest to exert moral influence. They disagreed over issues of slavery, women’s rights, and religion and found themselves at the center of race riots, denominational splits, college protests, a civil war, and one of the most public sex scandals in American history. They were nonetheless unified in their “Beecherism”—a phrase used to describe their sense of self-importance in reforming the nation.

Obbie Tyler Todd’s masterful work is the first biography of the Beechers in more than forty years and the first chronological portrait of one of the most influential families in nineteenth-century America.

OBBIETYLER TODD is pastor of Third Baptist Church in Marion, Illinois, and adjunct professor of church history at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the author of Let Men Be Free: Baptist Politics in the Early United States, 1776–1835.
Thoroughbred Nation
Making America at the Racetrack, 1791–1900

NATALIE A. ZACEK

“Prior to the rise of professional team sports, horse racing was America’s pastime, and Natalie Zacek’s engagingly written history fills an important gap in our understanding of the sport. Weaving together analyses of race and class with an appreciation for the economic and cultural complexities of horse racing, Zacek persuasively illuminates the ways in which the sport reflected broader society. A must-read for anyone interested in American culture.”—Jonathan Daniel Wells, author of The Kidnapping Club: Wall Street, Slavery, and Resistance on the Eve of the Civil War

From the colonial era to the beginning of the twentieth century, horse racing was by far the most popular sport in America. Great numbers of Americans and overseas visitors flocked to the nation’s tracks, and others avidly followed the sport in both general-interest newspapers and specialized periodicals.

Thoroughbred Nation offers a detailed yet panoramic view of thoroughbred racing in the United States, following the sport from its origins in colonial Virginia and South Carolina to its boom in the Lower Mississippi Valley, and then from its post–Civil War rebirth in New York City and Saratoga Springs to its opulent mythologization of the “Old South” at Louisville’s Churchill Downs, home of the Kentucky Derby. Natalie A. Zacek introduces readers to an unforgettable cast of characters, from “plungers” such as Virginia plantation owner William Ransom Johnson (known as the “Napoleon of the Turf”) and Wall Street financier James R. Keene (who would wager a fortune on the outcome of a single competition) to the jockeys, trainers, and grooms, most of whom were African American. While their names are no longer known, their work was essential to the sport. Zacek also details the careers of remarkable, though scarcely remembered, horses, whose achievements made them as famous in their day as more recent equine celebrities such as Seabiscuit or Secretariat.

Based upon exhaustive research in print and visual sources from libraries, archives, and museums across the United States, Thoroughbred Nation will be of interest both to those who love the sport of horse racing for its own sake and to those who are fascinated by how this pastime reflects and influences American identities.

NATALIE A. ZACEK is a senior lecturer in American studies at the University of Manchester. Her previous book, Settler Society in the English Leeward Islands, 1670–1776, won the Royal Historical Society’s Gladstone Book Prize.
Pressing Forward
My Life as a Baton Rouge Community Pioneer
PRESS L. ROBINSON SR.

“Dr. Press L. Robinson has written a compelling account of his rise from early life as the only child of sharecropper parents in rural South Carolina to becoming an esteemed academian and professor of chemistry to groundbreaking achievements in education as the first African American elected to the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board.”
—Judge Freddie Pitcher Jr. (ret.), author of Breaking Barriers: A View from the Bench and former chancellor of the Southern University Law Center

“Sharing his thoughts on being elected the first African American member of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board, among his other achievements, Dr. Robinson reveals his motivations and actions and elicits an appreciation for his journey.”—Rachel L. Emanuel, coauthor of A More Noble Cause: A. P. Tureaud and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Louisiana

“A civil rights veteran recollects over fifty years of organizing to amplify Black political voices across the American South. Dr. Robinson’s journey takes him from the sharecropping fields of Claussen, South Carolina, to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he continues his lifelong fight for equal representation. Pressing Forward is a clarion call to all who concern themselves with the work of racial justice and democratic resilience.”—Phillip Norman, oral historian of Grassroots Democracy

“Dr. Press Robinson is an American success story. Not by design, but by necessity. His life should inspire and encourage people to live fully engaged, even when they don’t want to be. His story is also a testament to education being the key to unlocking an incredible life.”—Todd L. Sterling, owner of Alpha Media & Public Relations

In this down-to-earth memoir, longtime educator and community leader Press L. Robinson Sr. recounts his hardscrabble childhood in South Carolina, his education at Morehouse College and Howard University, his career as a professor and administrator in the Southern University system, and his activities as a community leader in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The first elected Black member of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board, Robinson consistently fought to level the playing fields for Black Americans and to better the social and physical environment of his adopted city.

PRESS L. ROBINSON SR. began his career as an assistant professor of chemistry at Southern University Baton Rouge. He retired forty-one years later, having served as associate vice chancellor at Southern University Baton Rouge, chancellor at Southern University New Orleans, and vice president of the Southern University system.
The Pool Is Closed
Segregation, Summertime, and the Search for a Place to Swim

HANNAH S. PALMER

“We are the stories we tell. What about the stories we don’t? With her heart wide open, Hannah S. Palmer invites us on a journey of tragedy, revelation, exploration, and understanding as she probes the waterways of Atlanta with her children in tow, in an effort to expose the vagaries of racism and our potential to heal. She does so honestly and with a quiet courage that ripples through these pages. We care because she cares. And sometimes, that is enough. Grab your bathing suit because this pool is open.”—Carolyn Finney, author of Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors

“Blending memoir, history, and social commentary, The Pool Is Closed offers the reader a stunningly perceptive look at the meaning of race, inequality, and community in contemporary America. Palmer writes with humor, verve, and elegant clarity. She connects past with present, explores many conundrums of modern urban life, and relates her deep affection for aquatic environments. A thoroughly enjoyable read.”—Jeff Wiltse, author of Contested Waters: A Social History of Swimming Pools in America

“Palmer masterfully recounts how pools became the last battleground of segregation. Beautifully written and deeply felt, with a sharp eye for the revealing detail, her story will ensure that you never look at a city pool the same way again. Nor should you.”—John Blake, author of More Than I Imagined: What a Black Man Discovered about the White Mother He Never Knew

“Atlanta, and the rest of us, are lucky to have Hannah Palmer as the sympathetic but clear-eyed chronicler of the South’s metropolis. In The Pool Is Closed, Palmer is alternately a mom, a tireless shoe-leather reporter, and a troubled daughter of her native city, telling it, and the rest of us, the truths we need to hear.”—John Grammer, director, Center for Southern Studies, University of the South

HANNAH S. PALMER is a writer and designer from the Southside of Atlanta. She earned an MFA in creative writing from Sewanee: The University of the South and is the author of Flight Path: A Search for Roots beneath the World’s Busiest Airport. Through essays, memoir, and public art projects, she explores how hidden histories and wilderness shape our lives in the urban landscape.
Long overshadowed by the American Civil War, the Mexican-American War (1846–1848) has received significantly less attention from historians partly because of its questionable origin and controversial outcome. Rather than treat the conflict with a form of historical amnesia, the contributors to this volume argue that the Mexican-American War was a formative experience for the more than three hundred future Civil War generals who served in it as lower-grade officers. The Mexican War was the first combat experience for many of them, a laboratory that equipped a generation of young officers with practical lessons in strategy, tactics, logistics, and interpersonal relationships that they would use later to command forces during the Civil War.

TIMOTHY D. JOHNSON is the Elizabeth Gentry Brown Professor of History at Lipscomb University. His previous books on the Mexican-American War include A Gallant Little Army: The Mexico City Campaign and For Duty and Honor: Tennessee’s Mexican War Experience.
Reckoning with the Devil
Nathan Bedford Forrest in Myth and Memory

COURT CARNEY

“Carney has written an urgent and compelling book that traces the life and legacy of Nathan Bedford Forrest across two centuries. Considering the reality, romanticization, and reckoning with equal care and craft, Carney draws out one of the South’s—and nation’s—most infamous ghosts and demonstrates how he continues to haunt our politics and culture. Through deep research and insightful analysis, Reckoning with the Devil considers Forrest in his moment, our moment, and every moment in between.”—Charles L. Hughes, author of Country Soul: Making Music and Making Race in the American South and Why Bushwick Bill Matters

“While Nathan Bedford Forrest has never commanded as much attention as Robert E. Lee or Stonewall Jackson, he has persisted since the Civil War as an iconic figure of white southern resistance. Carney’s book expertly traces the movement of Forrest’s image through popular culture, in books, advertisements, monuments, ceremonies, and the screen, from his own lifetime to the present, paying particular attention to transformative moments like the Progressive Era, the Southern Agrarian movement, the Shelby-Foote-and-Ken-Burns-fueled resurgence of interest in Forrest in the later twentieth century, and the recent endeavors to remove his memorials, up through the rise of the new right-wing paramilitaries in our own times, providing insight into the changing role of racism within white southern identity over time.”—Elaine Frantz Parsons, author of Ku-Klux: The Birth of the Klan during Reconstruction

“In his wonderfully creative work, Carney interprets Forrest as resilient, pragmatic, fluid, and, most of all, ambiguous in every part of his life. The former slave trader, Confederate hero, arch-villain of the Fort Pillow massacre, and Klansman could (and did) represent practically any element of the Civil War memorial landscape: autodidactic military genius, violent racist, self-made millionaire, and unreconstructed rebel.”—John David Smith, author of An Old Creed for the New South: Proslavery Ideology and Historiography, 1865–1918

Court Carney’s Reckoning with the Devil grapples with the troubled, complex legacy of Nathan Bedford Forrest. More than a century after his death, Forrest’s image still bears varied interpretations, reflecting the intricate interplay of historical omissions and erasures, memory, and a contested past, all of which continually reshape perceptions of both Forrest and the Civil War.

COURT CARNEY is professor of history at Stephen F. Austin State University. He is the author of Cuttin’ Up: How Early Jazz Got America’s Ear and coeditor of The Politics and Power of Bob Dylan’s Live Performances: Play a Song for Me.
Slavery's Fugitives and the Making of the United States Constitution

TIMOTHY MESSER-KRUSE

Slavery’s Fugitives and the Making of the United States Constitution unearths a long-hidden factor that led to the Constitutional Convention in 1787. While historians have generally acknowledged that patriot leaders assembled in response to postwar economic chaos, the threat of popular insurgencies, and the inability of the states to agree on how to fund the national government, Timothy Messer-Kruse suggests that scholars have discounted Americans’ desire to compel Britain to return fugitives from slavery as a driving force behind the convention.

During the Revolutionary War, British governors offered freedom to enslaved Americans who joined the king’s army. Thousands responded by fleeing to English camps. After the British defeat at Yorktown, American diplomats demanded the surrender of fugitive slaves. When British generals refused, several states confiscated Loyalist estates and blocked payment of English creditors, hoping to apply enough pressure on the Crown to hand over the runaways. State laws conflicting with the 1783 Treaty of Paris violated the Articles of Confederation—the young nation’s first constitution—but Congress, lacking an executive branch or a federal judiciary, had no means to obligate states to comply. The standoff over the escaped slaves quickly escalated following the Revolution as Britain failed to abandon the western forts it occupied and took steps to curtail American commerce. More than any other single matter, the impasse over the return of enslaved Americans threatened to hamper the nation’s ability to expand westward, develop its commercial economy, and establish itself as a power among the courts of Europe. Messer-Kruse argues that the issue encouraged the founders to consider the prospect of scrapping the Articles of Confederation and drafting a superseding document that would dramatically increase federal authority—the Constitution.

TIMOTHY MESSER-KRUSE is a professor in the School of Cultural and Critical Studies at Bowling Green State University and author of The Patriots’ Dilemma: White Abolitionism and Black Banishment in the Founding of the United States of America.
Keith M. Finley’s *From Slavery to Segregation* explores the key features shaping southern politics during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as explained in the South’s defense of its racial systems. It treats slavery and segregation as part of the same whole rather than as discrete institutions rooted in different periods. In the process, the book uncovers the deep historical origins of the region’s states’ rights philosophy and the unfortunate persistence of a culture dominated by calls for white supremacy. While highlighting the broad overview of southern racial and political thought, Finley underscores the larger American struggle with racial injustice, which, although most pronounced in the South, afflicted the entire nation.

The South’s defense of chattel slavery became a natural model for the region’s defense of segregation during the Jim Crow era. Through a comparative analysis of the rhetoric employed in the justification of both racial institutions, Finley reveals elements of continuity and change in the region’s identity. Ultimately, he shows how the history of the twentieth-century South is irreparably linked to the century before it. For instance, one cannot understand the ferocity of resistance to the Supreme Court’s 1954 *Brown v. Board* decision without being aware of how and why the South emerged as it did after the Civil War.

The Old South and the New South shared a similar constellation of ideas that informed arguments advancing their respective race-based social orders, which took the form of a commonality of perception regarding race, a sense of being assailed by outsiders, and a series of appeals to the highest secular authority in the pantheon of regional and American beliefs—the Constitution. Discontinuity, however, marked the long-term strategies of both the pre-war and postwar South. Although segregationists sought to preserve the racial status quo as did their forebears, they ultimately relented when confronted with federal power and grudgingly shifted toward a narrative that less often foregrounded race when championing states’ rights.

**KEITH M. FINLEY** is associate professor of history and assistant director of the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies at Southeastern Louisiana University. He is the author of *Delaying the Dream: Southern Senators and the Fight against Civil Rights, 1938–1965*. 
Between Extremes
Seeking the Political Center in the Civil War North

JACK FURNISS

“In this groundbreaking study of Civil War politics in states loyal to the Union, Jack Furniss shows how conservative centrists led coalition governments committed to fighting the war along constitutional lines with preservation of the Union as their foremost goal. *Between Extremes* is an important book that reinterprets how the Union held together during its greatest challenge.”—Frank Towers, author of *The Urban South and the Coming of the Civil War*

“A scintillating explanation of how, during the political turbulence of the Civil War, the American Union’s key state governors harnessed the electoral muscle of conservative centrist patriotism. Furniss’s astute examination, fresh in conception and compelling in argument, rightly casts the malleable Union party coalitions as essential to Lincoln’s purposes and national survival. Quite simply, a lasting gem of a book.”—Richard Carwardine, author of *Lincoln: A Life of Purpose and Power*

"*Between Extremes* offers an engaging, original, and insightful survey of Civil War—era politics. Refuting a common depiction of deep-seated animosity between the Republican and Democratic parties and their respective voters, Furniss persuasively highlights the existence of a powerful political center that sustained, through many hard times, the attempts to save the Union and ensure its military victory in 1865.”—Joan Waugh, author of *U. S. Grant: American Hero, American Myth*

Between 1861 and 1865, northern voters fortified Abraham Lincoln’s administration as it oversaw the end of the institution of slavery and an unprecedented expansion in the size and scope of the federal government. Since the United States never considered suspending the democratic process during the Civil War, these revolutionary developments—indeed the entire war effort—depended on ballots as much as bullets. Why did civilians who, at the start of the conflict, had not anticipated or desired these transformations to their society nonetheless vote to uphold them? Jack Furniss’s *Between Extremes* proposes an answer to this question by revealing a potent strand of centrist politics that took hold across the Union and provided the conservative rationales that allowed most northerners to accept the war’s radical outcomes.

**JACK FURNISS** is head of the history and politics department at an independent secondary school in London, England. He has graduate degrees in history from the University of Oxford and the University of Virginia.
The Confederate Resurgence of 1864

WILLIAM MARVEL

William Marvel’s *The Confederate Resurgence of 1864* examines a dozen understudied Confederate and Union military operations carried out during the spring of 1864 that, taken cumulatively, greatly revived white southerners’ hopes for independence. Among the pivotal moments during this period were the sinking of the USS *Housatonic* by the CSS *Hunley*, Nathan Bedford Forrest’s defeat of William Sooy Smith’s cavalry raid, and the Confederate army’s victory at Olustee, Florida. The repulse of Union advances on Dalton, Georgia; botched Union raids on Richmond; and the capture of the Union garrison in Plymouth, North Carolina, likewise suggested that the tide of fighting had turned toward the Confederate cause. These events boosted the morale of southern troops and citizens, and caused grave concerns about the war effort in the North and in the mind of Abraham Lincoln.

In late 1863 and early 1864, dejection and despair prevailed in the South: Union soldiers had vanquished Robert E. Lee at Gettysburg, the Confederate nation had been cut in two, Tennessee was lost, and Braxton Bragg’s army had been utterly routed at Chattanooga. Defeatism loomed in the South during the first weeks of 1864, and the ease with which William T. Sherman rampaged across Mississippi illustrated the dominance of Union forces, while Confederates’ ineffectual assault on New Bern accentuated their weakness. Yet between February 20 and April 30, southern troops enjoyed an unbroken string of successes that included turning back a concerted Union offensive during the Red River campaign as well as Forrest’s triumphant incursions into Union City, Paducah, and Fort Pillow. Aided by flawed strategy implemented by Union army officers, the achievements of Confederate forces restored hope and confidence in camp and on the southern home front.

The Confederacy’s battlefield successes during the early months of 1864 remained almost unnoticed by Civil War scholars until recently and have never been investigated in detail until now. The victories invigorated southern combatants, demonstrating how abruptly the most dismal military prospects could be reversed. Without that experience, Marvel argues, the Confederates who faced Sherman and Grant in the spring of that year would certainly have displayed less ferocity and likely would have succumbed more quickly to the demoralization that ultimately led to the collapse of Confederate resistance.

WILLIAM MARVEL is the author of twenty books on the American Civil War, including *Lincoln’s Mercenaries: Economic Motivation among Union Soldiers during the Civil War*. 
A Wonderful Career in Crime
Charles Cowlam’s Masquerades in the Civil War Era and Gilded Age

FRANK W. GARMON JR.

“Amid the giants of the age, we need to remember that a host of peripheral people left their own, often dubious mark on events. The career of Charles Cowlam makes for almost unbelievable reading. Liar, fantasist, con man, jailbird, teller, Cowlam and his story throw a different and lurid light on the eras of the Civil War and Reconstruction. Kudos to Frank W. Garmon Jr. for tracing Cowlam’s trail and dragging him into public view!”—Mark Wahlgren Summers, author of The Ordeal of the Reunion: A New History of Reconstruction

“Colorful rogues were not limited to Victorian fiction in the 1800s. Real-life characters such as Loreta Velasquez, Charles Dunham, Sanford Conover, and more gained fame—and infamy—for their deceptions and illegal acts. No one was more bold than Charles Cowlam, whose poses and deceits invite fictionalization, but they were all true. Garmon’s A Wonderful Career in Crime reveals Cowlam with impressive research and a deft hand at seeing through a lifelong criminal.”—William C. Davis, author of Invent- ing Loreta Velasquez: Confederate Soldier Impersonator, Media Celebrity, and Con Artist

“A Wonderful Career in Crime is a deeply researched and illuminating account of a quintessential nineteenth-century American filmfam artist, whose myriad scams brought him into contact with many of the century’s major historical figures and developments.”—Elizabeth D. Leonard, author of Benjamin Franklin Butler: A Noisy, Fearless Life

Charles Cowlam’s career as a convict, spy, detective, congressional candidate, adventurer, and con artist spanned the Civil War, Reconstruction, and Gilded Age. His swindles touched many of the era’s most prominent figures, including Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, and Ulysses S. Grant. Cowlam was a chameleon in a world of strangers. His intrigues, pulled from the shadows by historian Frank W. Garmon Jr. in A Wonderful Career in Crime, uncover how Americans built trust amid the transience and anonymity of the nineteenth century.

FRANK W. GARMON JR. is assistant professor of American studies at Christopher Newport University.
Hard Times in an American Workhouse, 1853–1920

GREGG ANDREWS

Hard Times in an American Workhouse, 1853–1920 is the first comprehensive examination of a workhouse in the United States, offering a critical history of the institution in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. Using the Old St. Louis Workhouse as a representative example, award-winning historian Gregg Andrews brings to life individual stories of men and women sentenced to this debtors’ prison to break rocks in the quarry, sew clothing, scrub cell floors and walls, or toil in its brush factory. Most inmates, too poor to pay requisite fines, came through the city’s police courts on charges of vagrancy, drunkenness, disturbing the peace, or violating some other ordinance. The penal system criminalized everything from poverty and unemployment to homelessness and the mere fact of being Black. Workhouses proved overcrowded and inhospitable facilities that harbored hardcore felons and young street toughs along with prostitutes, petty thieves, peace disturbers, political dissenters, “levee rats,” adulterers, and those who suffered from alcohol and drug addiction. Officials even funneled the elderly, the mentally disabled, and the physically infirm into the workhouse system.

The torture of prisoners in the hellish chambers of the St. Louis Workhouse proved far worse than Charles Dickens’s portrayals of cruelty in the debtors’ prisons of Victorian England. The ordinance that created the St. Louis complex in 1843 banned corporal punishment, but shackles, chains, and the whipping post remained central to the institution’s attempts to impose discipline. Officers also banished more recalcitrant inmates to solitary confinement in the “bull pen,” where they subsisted on little more than bread and water. Andrews traces efforts by critics to reform the workhouse, a political plum in the game of petty ward patronage played by corrupt and capricious judges, jailers, and guards. The best opportunity for lasting change came during the Progressive Era, but the limited contours of progressivism in St. Louis thwarted reformers’ efforts. The defeat of a municipal bond issue in 1920 effectively ended plans to replace the urban industrial workhouse model with a more humane municipal farm system championed by progressives.

GREGG ANDREWS is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of History at Texas State University and the award-winning author of seven books, including Shantyboats and Roustabouts: The River Poor of St. Louis, 1875–1930.
Spying on Students
The FBI, Red Squads, and Student Activists in the 1960s South
GREGG L. MICHEL

Gregg L. Michel’s *Spying on Students* focuses on the law enforcement campaign against New Left and progressive student activists in the South during the 1960s. Often overlooked by scholars, white southern students worked alongside their Black peers in the civil rights struggle, drove opposition to the Vietnam War, and embraced the counterculture’s rejection of conventions and norms. While African Americans bore the brunt of police surveillance and harassment, federal agencies such as the FBI and local police intelligence units known as Red Squads subjected white student activists to wide-ranging, intrusive, and illegal monitoring. By examining the experiences of white students in the South, Michel provides fresh insights into the destructive, weaponized spying tactics deployed by state actors in their attempts to quash dissent in the region.

Drawing on previously secret FBI files and records of other investigative agencies, Michel demonstrates that authorities at all levels of government turned the full power of their offices against white activists—listening to their conversations, infiltrating their meetings, and sowing discord within their families and schools. Efforts to surveil and repress social activism reflected officials’ fear of growing unrest on the part of white students who questioned the southern racial status quo and recoiled as the horrors of Vietnam laid bare the shibboleth of American exceptionalism. As white students revolted on campuses elsewhere, most notably at Berkeley and Columbia, law enforcement sought to curtail such disruptions in the South. In their view, white students threatened domestic tranquility and therefore warranted close monitoring.

*Spying on Students* presents a unique perspective on state actors’ war on dissent, exposing their suspicion of opposing political beliefs and revealing their paranoia as they sought to preserve the existing racial order. The work complicates further the dominant narrative of the era that casts white southern students as opponents of social change. The counterintelligence operations employed against them show not only that white students valued political engagement and social activism but also that authorities considered them a menace to the country as a whole.

GREGG L. MICHEL is associate professor of history at the University of Texas at San Antonio and author of *Struggle for a Better South: The Southern Student Organizing Committee, 1964–1969.*
Playing at War
Identity and Memory in Civil War Video Games

Edited by PATRICK A. LEWIS and JAMES HILL WELBORN III

Playing at War offers an innovative focus on Civil War video games as significant sites of memory creation, distortion, and evolution in popular culture. With fifteen essays by historians, the collection analyzes the emergence and popularity of video games that topically engage the period surrounding the American Civil War, from the earliest console games developed in the 1980s through the web-based games of the twenty-first century, including popular titles such as Red Dead Redemption 2 and War of Rights.

Alongside discussions of technological capabilities and advances, as well as their impact on gameplay and content, the essays consider how these games engage with historical scholarship on the Civil War era, the degree to which video games reflect and contribute to popular understandings of the period, and how those dynamics reveal shifting conceptions of martial identity and historical memory within U.S. popular culture. Video games offer productive sites for extending the analysis of Civil War memory into the post–Confederates in the Attic era, including the political and cultural moments of Obama and Trump, where overt expressions of Lost Cause memory were challenged and removed from schools and public spaces, then embraced by new manifestations of white supremacist organizations.

Edited by Patrick A. Lewis and James Hill Welborn III, Playing at War traces the drift of Civil War memory into digital spaces and gaming cultures, encouraging historians to engage more extensively with video games as important cultural media for examining how contemporary Americans interact with the nation’s past.

PATRICK A. LEWIS is the director of collections and research at the Filson Historical Society in Louisville, Kentucky, and the author of For Slavery and Union: Benjamin Buckner and Kentucky Loyalties in the Civil War.

JAMES HILL WELBORN III, associate professor of history at Georgia College and State University, is the author of Dueling Cultures, Damnable Legacies: Southern Violence and White Supremacy in the Civil War Era.

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Military Training at Historically Black Colleges in the Jim Crow South

MARCUS S. COX
Foreword by RUSSEL L. HONORÉ

“Segregated Soldiers is instructive on how African American attitudes toward military service and black participation in military training programs at historically black institutions of higher learning worked in tandem to advance equality throughout the twentieth century. . . . It provides us with an invaluable starting point for understanding how military training programs shaped the attitudes of African American students at HBCUs toward American society throughout the twentieth century.” — American Historical Review

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A Brief Moment in the Sun

Francis Cardozo and Reconstruction in South Carolina

NEIL KINGHAN

“A biracial Charlestonian with a once-enslaved mother, Francis Cardozo distinguished himself in South Carolina’s government through his high ethics and devotion to duty. He single-handedly belied the false ‘tragic era’ narrative that white Redeemers first foisted on the public and then on historians. Neil Kinghan restores Cardozo to the prominence he deserves and gives readers a deeply satisfying portrayal of his life and times.” — Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, author of Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896–1920

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AMERICAN WARS AND POPULAR CULTURE

Series Editors:
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In twenty-first-century America, mass media is synonymous with mass memory. As a result, the ways in which Americans imagine (and selectively ignore) the past based on feature films, documentaries, television shows, streaming content, popular fiction, comics, art, music, and even video games have become interchangeable with “history.” How we remember the past collectively is fundamental to constructing national identities and the ever-changing definition of a “real” American. Nowhere are these connections between the past and everyday life more evident, or hotly contested, than in popular depictions of warfare.

This series from LSU Press explores how depictions of American military conflicts in popular culture wield immense social, cultural, political, and economic power in the relative present. The editors seek monographs and edited volumes—from both emerging and established scholars—rooted in a wide range of disciplines including history, literature, film studies, art history, anthropology, cultural studies, public history, media and communications, and military studies. Interdisciplinary approaches are encouraged, as is writing aimed at accessibility for nonacademic readers. Topics of interest include, but are certainly not limited to:

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- home-front experiences and antiwar movements in the United States
- depictions of “the enemy” on cultural, racial, and gendered terms
- generational methods of consuming war in mass culture and evolving notions of American democracy, individualism, and exceptionalism
- the evolution of technology in representing warfare, including the rise of video games
- representations of the roles of women and children in warfare
- the influence of pop culture (and propaganda) on foreign policy and relations

Please send proposals to acquisitions editor James Long at jlong12@lsu.edu.

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In the fall of 2024, LSU Press will begin publishing Sewanee Poetry, a book series edited by Wyatt Prunty and Leigh Anne Couch. Two collections will be published each year, showcasing the work of both emerging and mid- or late-career poets. The series editors value poems of original perspective, accomplished style, and mastery of aesthetic argument. Sewanee Poetry continues the celebrated tradition of poetry publishing at LSU Press with books of great vision and exquisite craft.

Forthcoming volumes in the series include:
- Candy, by Dan Albergotti (Fall 2024)
- Novice, by Nida Sophasarun (Spring 2025)

Currently, the series does not accept unsolicited book proposals or manuscript submissions.
BLACK DIASPORIC LITERATURES
Series Editor:
DONAVAN L. RAMON, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Black Diasporic Literatures, a new book series from LSU Press, features innovative works of scholarship on the literatures and experiences of peoples descended from the African continent—including Africans, African Americans, Caribbeans, Central and South Americans, and more. Due to enslavement and colonization, African-descended peoples have been dispersed throughout the world, often chronicling their experiences of displacement in works of great aesthetic innovation and sociopolitical expression. The series is open to proposals for monographs and edited collections, from both emerging and established scholars, that examine the plurality of Black Diasporic experiences by analyzing their literatures, histories, and cultures.

Given the broad nature of the Black Diaspora, the series welcomes book projects that are equally broad in scope. We seek projects that are interdisciplinary and encourage submissions from authors with a wide range of racial, ethnic, social, and cultural backgrounds.

Topics might include, but are not limited to:
- Black literatures and cultures of the Global South
- Black Diasporic pedagogy
- challenging boundaries—of race, class, sexuality, and geographies
- mixed-race studies/Creolization
- Black cultures in the U.S. Southwest and along the Gulf Coast
- Afro-Indigenous interplay in the Global South
- Black drama/theater across the Diaspora
- Afrofuturism in art and culture
- Black world cinema
- Black Lives Matter across the Diaspora
- long-term effects of slavery, Jim Crow, colonization
- shared experiences/differences in Black cultures across the Diaspora

Book proposals should include a cover letter, working title, table of contents, sample chapters, information about competitive titles, and a résumé or CV. Also provide an approximate total word count, including notes and bibliography, and information about proposed illustrations (if any).

Please send proposals to series editor Donavan L. Ramon at dramon@siue.edu, and acquisitions editor James Long at jlong12@lsu.edu.

NOIR(E)
Race and Belonging in the Afro-French World
Series Editor:
ROBIN MITCHELL, University at Buffalo

Noir(e): Race and Belonging in the Afro-French World centers Black people and Blackness in the Afro-French World broadly defined, reflecting on the circulation, across oceans and hemispheres, of ideas with roots in living Indigenous cultures. The series speaks to the concerns of modernity in hyperconnected, multicultural metropoles. As such, the kind of interdisciplinary projects to which we are deeply committed will engage French historical topics, the interplay between France and the rest of the world, and across distinct historical periods.

The series will move the discipline beyond looking at Black peoples in places, such as France and the French Caribbean, as mere past representations by others, instead examining these peoples’ direct agency in crafting historical narratives, fomenting historical change, and reshaping thought. The series is intended to further develop and consolidate this distinct field of inquiry on the lives of enslaved, in-between, and postcolonial Black peoples in the Afro-French World from the seventeenth century to the present.

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Please send proposals to Alisa Plant, director of the Press and in-house series editor at alisaplant1@lsu.edu.
Andrew W. Keitt’s book, intensively researched and engagingly written, illuminates the life and work of an important but understudied figure as well as the linked social, political, and medical movements that fostered the development of Spanish liberalism.”—Elizabeth A. Williams, author of Appetite and Its Discontents: Science, Medicine, and the Urge to Eat, 1750–1950

“A Physician in the Age of Liberal Reform presents a detailed investigation of a complex and multifaceted individual who was both innovative and emblematic of his time. In so doing, the study makes a critical contribution to the analysis of medicine’s central role in crystallizing the values, discourses, and practices that hastened the collapse of the old regime and contributed to the fitful, imperfect emergence of a new liberal order in nineteenth-century Spain.”—Enric J. Novella, López Piñero Inter-University Institute for Science Studies, University of Valencia

ANDREW W. KEITT

Spanish physicians constituted a crucial political force in the nineteenth century during the tumultuous process of nation-building that followed the War of Independence against the Napoleonic invasion of the Iberian Peninsula. Many participated in the Cortes of Cádiz, which drafted Spain’s first constitution in 1812 and went on to prove highly influential in the public sphere and legislature during the liberal revolution that undertook the establishment of a new, and precarious, political order.

Andrew W. Keitt’s A Physician in the Age of Liberal Reform excavates the life and work of one such doctor, Ildefonso Martínez y Fernández, whose brief career coincided with the consolidation of the liberal revolution and the drive to improve and professionalize Spanish medicine. Born in 1821, Martínez was a polymath and activist whose prolific literary and scholarly output made him a fixture in the political and intellectual ferment of midcentury Spain until his untimely death in 1855 during a devastating outbreak of cholera. He produced a significant body of intellectual research, made key contributions to the profession, and cultivated a deep engagement with the political struggles of the period. His impassioned endeavors, as chronicled by Keitt, highlight the efforts of Spanish physicians to mobilize medical science toward forging a new political culture for liberal Spain.

ANDREW W. KEITT, associate professor of history at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, is the author of Inventing the Sacred: Imposture, Inquisition, and the Boundaries of the Supernatural in Golden Age Spain.
Lorca’s Experimental Theater
Breaking the Guardrails of Convention

ANDREW A. ANDERSON

“Both students and specialists will be grateful for this lucidly written book, an ambitious and insightful rereading and remapping of Federico García Lorca’s experimental theater—one which guides us masterfully through some of the playwright’s most challenging works.”—Christopher Maurer, editor of Lorca’s Collected Poems and Selected Verse

“Anderson offers readers an insightful account of Lorca’s dramatic trajectory and the ways in which his experimental theater—often metatheater—pushed the boundaries of theatrical convention. Anderson’s detailed readings of plays, combined with treatments of Lorca’s influences, from Broadway to Expressionism, persuade us both of Lorca’s modernity and of his place within the historical avant-garde.”—Federico Bonaddio, author of Federico García Lorca: The Poetry in All Things

“Anderson has written a groundbreaking study of Lorca’s avant-garde theater. He convincingly interprets the plays as Expressionist debates on theater and truth, personal identity and political commitment.”—James Valender, professor, Centro de Estudios Lingüísticos y Literarios, El Colegio de México

Critical and historical discussions of the life and work of Federico García Lorca, Spain’s foremost poet and playwright of the twentieth century, often obscure the author’s more avant-garde dramatic works. In *Lorca’s Experimental Theater*, Andrew A. Anderson focuses on four of Lorca’s most challenging plays—*Amor de don Perlimplín con Belisa en su jardín*, *El público*, *Así que pasen cinco años*, and *El sueño de la vida* (previously known as *Comedia sin título*)—and on the surrounding context in which they came to be written and in only one case performed during his lifetime. While none of Lorca’s plays can be considered conventional, these four works stand out in his corpus for challenging theatrical conventions most forcefully, both thematically and technically.

With discussions of stagecraft, artistic modernism, and the historical avant-garde, *Lorca’s Experimental Theater* provides detailed interpretive readings of the four plays, surveys their textual and performative history, and examines the most important contemporary influences on Lorca’s creation of these expressive, innovative works.

**ANDREW A. ANDERSON**, professor emeritus of Spanish at the University of Virginia, is the author of *Configurations of a Cultural Scene: Young Artists and Writers in Madrid, 1918–1930* and many other works. He is the editor of nine critical editions of Lorca’s writings, among them the first scholarly edition of the original manuscript of *Poeta en Nueva York*.
The novel has often been characterized as the art form without a form. Although there may not be any rules for how to write a novel, as Matthew Clark shows in his new work of practical analysis, a good novel is as carefully formed as a good poem. *From Paragraphs to Plots* uncovers large compositional features of narrative construction, thereby exposing elements that constitute the architecture of the novel. Clark begins by discussing the segmentation of narratives, from the paragraph level up to the whole novel, with case studies of the composition of Jane Austen’s *Emma* and Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*. The next chapter explores an important, though often neglected, feature of narrative architecture called ring composition: a particular kind of repetition where the beginning and the end of a text are the same or similar. From there, Clark analyzes in detail two novels, Ford Madox Ford’s *The Good Soldier* and Joseph Heller’s *Catch-22*, identifying the repetitions, inversions, links, and fragmented narrations that comprise each narrative.

The book’s second half focuses on simple and complex plot forms. Examining iterations of simple forms—plots that begin with a specific initiating event and proceed in an essentially regular chronological progression from beginning to middle to end—Clark outlines several common beginnings (Arrival, Departure, Meeting, Need, Birth, Death) and endings (Departures, Returns, Marriages, Need Satisfied, Death), along with a short account of less common ways to begin a novel. Subsequent discussions examine devices used in complex plot forms, such as Beginning with the Ending, Second Chapter Retrospects, Ghosts from the Past, One-Year Novels, Mirror Plots, Simultaneous Narration, Unnatural Chronology, and Non-Narrative Elements. The final chapter draws together the preceding discussions with a detailed case study of a recent novel, Viet Thanh Nguyen’s Pulitzer Prize–winning *The Sympathizer*.

By analyzing common practices of narrative construction, *From Paragraphs to Plots* identifies sources of beauty and meaning in literature, approaching the aesthetic and the thematic as simultaneous and inextricable.

**MATTHEW CLARK** is professor emeritus and senior scholar at York University in Toronto. His previous books include *How to Reread a Novel*, *Narrative Structures and the Language of the Self*, and *A Matter of Style: On Writing and Technique*. 
The Disinformers  
Social Media, Disinformation, and Elections

Edited by LANCE PORTER

The Disinformers uncovers the people and the organizations behind the disinformation campaigns that began on social media with the 2016 U.S. presidential election and reached a violent crescendo with the storming of the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. Edited by social media researcher Lance Porter, this vital collection of interdisciplinary scholarship analyzes how foreign interference destabilized political conversations, stoked racial tensions, and spread disinformation across social media platforms to produce increasing friction among voters.

With a new presidential election cycle in motion, members of the voting public continue questioning both the security of the nation's election systems and the validity of its media networks. The 2016 election thrust the vulnerability of voting technology to the forefront of conversations in the United States and sparked discussions about the use of social media to distribute divisive and false information. While Donald Trump's claims of fraud in the 2016 and 2020 elections were verifiably false, disinformation undoubtedly roiled the nation's media systems and spurred on the insurrection of January 6.

LANCE PORTER is the Karen W. and Daniel J. King Distinguished Professor in Advertising in the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia.

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A Way to Live Now
How Journalism Shaped Ernest Hemingway

JOHN FENSTERMAKER

"John Fenstermaker emphasizes the importance of journalism as he reviews the life of Ernest Hemingway. Without journalism, Hemingway may not have discovered the 'one true sentence' that led him to write short stories and novels that continue to be admired and read."—Joseph M. Flora, author of Hemingway's Nick Adams

"Fenstermaker neatly integrates Hemingway's multiple voices, as found in his personal letters and his journalism, to reveal how, in both his creative fiction and nonfiction, he emerged triumphantly as the 'Father of Modern American Prose.'"—Linda Patterson Miller, chair of the Editorial Advisory Board for the Cambridge Edition of The Letters of Ernest Hemingway

"What makes Hemingway Hemingway? How did he come to fame? Are women flat characters in his fiction? (Definitely not!) These are some of the issues Fenstermaker examines in this insightful and well-researched book. Of particular note is his look at the part Esquire played in bringing to light one of America's greatest writers."—Christine Peterson, professor emerita of English, Northern Illinois University

A Way to Live Now juxtaposes the dual roles of fiction writer and journalist throughout the career of Ernest Hemingway. Focusing on the author's appearances in Esquire over forty years, John Fenstermaker traces the evolving nature of Hemingway's presence in its pages: first as the author of twenty-five essays (1933–1936) and six short stories (1936–1939), then as a popular subject for interactions among editors, subscribers, and critics (1933–1961), a process that continued posthumously with reprints, miscellanea, and reader commentaries (1961–1973). Developing a friendship and correspondence with founding editor Arnold Gingrich, Hemingway contributed to twenty-eight of the magazine's first thirty-three issues, including classic pieces such as "On the Blue Water" and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro." Through Esquire, Fenstermaker finds a portal for tracing a documentary record of Hemingway as both writer and public figure.

Filled with incisive commentaries on his roles as reporter, essayist, and fiction writer, A Way to Live Now: How Journalism Shaped Ernest Hemingway offers new perspectives on the eventful life and work of one of the twentieth century's most influential authors and complicated personalities.

JOHN FENSTERMAKER is the Fred L. Standley Professor of English and Distinguished Teacher Emeritus at Florida State University.
The Evolving Project of Cormac McCarthy

Edited by JONATHAN ELMORE and RICK ELMORE

“This collection charts a remarkable new direction in McCarthy studies. With insight and vigor, contributors approach the full canon of the author’s works from the perspective of philosophy, ethics, politics, and character, and they expand our understanding of McCarthy immensely.” — Steven Frye, author of Unguessed Kinships: Naturalism and the Geography of Hope in Cormac McCarthy

“Recognizing the evolution of McCarthy as a writer and the multiplicity of readings possible in his rich literary landscapes, this volume challenges dominant narratives and dives into understudied aspects of his works.” — Lydia R. Cooper, author of Cormac McCarthy: A Complexity Theory of Literature

“Jonathan Elmore and Rick Elmore have drawn together a terrific collection of voices in McCarthy studies with this fresh and timely consideration of the author’s career as a whole. It’s exciting to read this particular group of writers, established scholars who aren’t often put in conversation with each other. A fitting volume for the next era of McCarthy research.” — Stacey Peebles, editor of the Cormac McCarthy Journal

“Seeking to establish the fundamentally prescriptive and positive character of McCarthy’s project, Jonathan Elmore and Rick Elmore have assembled an impressive array of cogent voices that engage the oeuvre in clever and intriguing ways certain to bear much critical fruit in the years to come.” — D. Marcel DeCoste, author of Professing Darkness: Cormac McCarthy’s Catholic Critique of American Enlightenment

The Evolving Project of Cormac McCarthy presents eleven essays of original scholarship that undertake a programmatic reassessment of McCarthy’s literary and philosophical worldview. Examining issues of race, morality, history, metaphysics, law, economics, and ecology in McCarthy’s writing reveals how these themes intersect in an overarching, positive gesture that characterizes his work. Taken together, the essays offer a more expansive understanding of McCarthy’s critique of contemporary society, while providing new clarity on his vision of alternate ways of living and community beyond their present life-denying manifestations.

JONATHAN ELMORE, associate professor of English at Savannah State University, is the editor of Fiction and the Sixth Mass Extinction: Narrative in an Era of Loss.

RICK ELMORE, associate professor of philosophy at Appalachian State University, is the coeditor of The Biopolitics of Punishment: Derrida and Foucault.

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ALSO OF INTEREST
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Parallel Lives
From Freud and Mann to Arbus and Plath

JEFFREY MEYERS

PRAISE FOR JEFFREY MEYERS

“One of our greatest living biographers.”—Paul Theroux, author of The Mosquito Coast

“Meyers’s Hemingway is one of the great biographies of our half-century, a masterwork in which true scholarship and creative art are so united as to become indistinguishable.”—George D. Painter, author of Marcel Proust: A Biography

Parallel Lives covers the century from the birth of Sigmund Freud in 1856 to the death of Sylvia Plath in 1963. Written by the esteemed biographer and literary critic Jeffrey Meyers, the book includes European, American, and Russian authors and artists, film directors and actors, children and soldiers, friends and lovers, rivals and enemies. Drawing on the bifocal principle of dual composition in Plutarch, these brief lives are arranged in pairs to interact with each other and illuminate their subjects’ similarities, characters, and friendships.

The linked structure of Parallel Lives allows several major figures—Sigmund Freud, Evelyn Waugh, Edmund Wilson, Vladimir Nabokov, Ernest Hemingway, and Seamus Heaney—to appear in multiple chapters. The most violent friendship ended when Verlaine shot Rimbaud and went to prison, and Rimbaud crawled back from Africa to die miserably in France. The most brilliant friendship broke up when Wilson attacked Nabokov’s edition of Alexander Pushkin. The most moving connection was Audrey Hepburn’s tender and sympathetic attachment to her soul-sister Anne Frank. Using mirror images reveals a new way to perceive these illustrious men and women.

Each chapter shifts the focus back and forth between two subjects, comparing them, changing perspective, reevaluating similarities and contrasts. With vivid details and dramatic events, Meyers emphasizes the backgrounds, intellectual influences, and personality traits of his paired subjects. By examining the complex motives for irrational behavior ranging from deep affection to intense hostility, warm encouragement to bitter rivalry (sometimes together in the same chapter), Parallel Lives offers insights into the dynamics of complementary characters.

JEFFREY MEYERS, one of twelve Americans in the Royal Society of Literature, is the author of fifty-six books on biography, art, film, and literary criticism. His work has been translated into fourteen languages and published on six continents. He has received a grant from the Guggenheim Foundation and an Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters honoring exceptional achievement. In 2012, he gave the Seymour Lectures in Biography at the National Libraries of Australia.

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Seamus Heaney’s Gifts

HENRY HART

“Henry Hart’s book should be unignorable for future writers on Seamus Heaney and will be of genuine help to all who try to take an overview of his work.”—Robert Crawford, author of Eliot after “The Wasteland”

“This is a fascinating, deftly and deeply researched study of Heaney, taking as its remit his lifelong sense of himself as a poet with a gift (he was!) and his penchant for gift-giving. It will quickly become required reading for the legions of Heaney’s readers around the world.”—Richard Rankin Russell, author of Seamus Heaney’s Regions

“This is an original treatment of an important subject, written by a scholar and poet well-grounded in Heaney’s work. There is much here that is new and fresh, and cumulatively the narrative gives a perceptive and highly textured account of one of our most celebrated poets.”—Stephen Enniss, director of the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin

Throughout his career, Seamus Heaney maintained that poetry came to him from a mysterious source like a gift of grace, and that the recipient of this sort of offering had an ethical obligation to share it with others. Seamus Heaney’s Gifts provides the first comprehensive examination of his preoccupation with gifts and gift-exchange. Drawing on extensive research in Heaney’s papers, as well as three decades of correspondence with the poet, Henry Hart presents a richly detailed inspection of Heaney’s life and work that foregrounds the Irishman’s commitment to the vocation of poetry as a public art capable of reestablishing civil bonds between people in polarized societies. As Hart shows, Heaney found models for gift-giving in his rural community in Northern Ireland, the Bible, the rituals of the Catholic Church, and the literature of mystical and mythical quests.

Seamus Heaney’s Gifts explains the famed poet’s ideas about the artist’s gift, the necessity of gift-exchange acts, and the moral responsibility to share one’s talents for the benefit of others.

HENRY HART is the Mildred and J. B. Hickman Professor of Humanities at the College of William and Mary. He has published four poetry collections and numerous scholarly books about modern poets, including biographies of James Dickey and Robert Frost. From 1984 to 1994 he coedited VERSE, an international poetry magazine, and from 2018 to 2020 he served as poet laureate of Virginia.
Bequeath
Essays
MELORA WOLFF

“Melora Wolff’s memoir in essays brings thrillingly to life the vanished New York of her childhood and adolescence in the 1970s, along with her beloved parents and friends. In glorious prose, Wolff conjures textures, ideals, and emotions—from a girl’s early experience of joy to a city’s rampant paranoia and the eager futurism of *Lost in Space*. *Bequeath* is a beautiful, memorable book.”—Claire Messud, author of *Kant’s Little Prussian Head and Other Reasons Why I Write: An Autobiography in Essays*

“These magical essays shimmer with tenderness and regret, with sensuous allusion, joy, self-deprecating humor, and wry intelligence. The memories are so successfully evoked that the question then becomes: Does the present stand a chance, now that the past has been recaptured?”—Phillip Lopate, author of *A Year and a Day: An Experiment in Essays*

“*Bequeath* is a collection that reads like a memoir, or even more: a succession of memoirs. Each essay here is as layered and fully rendered as a book. The voice is assured, the narrative movements as inevitable as they are unpredictable. Tracing the arc of a life and a family—her own—Wolff reminds us of all we know and all we never know, the insufficiency of memory and also its necessity.”—David L. Ulin, author of *Sidewalking: Coming to Terms with Los Angeles*

What should we do with the things we inherit? In ten intimate essays as vivid as fiction and as varied as music, Melora Wolff’s *Bequeath* presents a flawed, funny, impressionable narrator who tries to solve the mysteries of bequeathed artifacts, family myths, and haunting mistakes—while also figuring out how to grow up in dangerous, glamorous 1970s New York City.

With a wide range of voices—comic, lyric, collective, personal, joyful, and deeply elegiac—Wolff pays homage to her musician father and family as she roams a past rich with cultural touchstones and indelible characters, from *West Side Story* and *Lost in Space* to Leonard Bernstein and Gloria Steinem. *Bequeath* explores the legacies we impose and bestow on one another.

MELORA WOLFF’s work has appeared in publications such as *Brick*, the *New York Times*, the *Normal School*, *Best American Fantasy*, *Speculative Nonfiction*, and *Every Father’s Daughter: Twenty-Four Women Writers Remember Their Fathers*, and has received multiple Notable Essay of the Year citations from *Best American Essays*. She is director of creative writing at Skidmore College.
Otherworldly Mothering argues that literary works by Toni Morrison, Gloria Naylor, Paule Marshall, Audre Lorde, and Toni Cade Bambara reimagine subjectivity in processual and relational terms through a rewriting of maternal praxis, a technique that unveils the historical continuities between antebellum and neoliberal America. By refiguring materials drawn from the tradition of slave narratives, Black women’s literature of the 1970s and 1980s often conjures maternal otherworlds where it is possible to engage alternative modes of being.

In conversation with the work of Hortense Spillers, Sylvia Wynter, and Saidiya Hartman, Marika Ceschia analyzes how Black women writers find in the maternal a means of creatively re envisioning the figure of the human. Morrison’s Song of Solomon, Naylor’s Linden Hills, Marshall’s Praisesong for the Widow, Lorde’s Zami, and Bambara’s The Salt Eaters each change the strictures that dictate how the human is performed. As these texts show, maternal praxis can have a transformative ontological effect: confronting the toll exerted by centuries of racial violence, these writers reclaim the maternal as a site of subject formation.

Otherworldly Mothering reassesses canonical works of twentieth-century Black women’s literature alongside theoretical debates around the ontology of the human, antiblackness, and Black motherhood. Ceschia proposes a reappraisal of maternal praxis that challenges neoliberal discourse and questions recent critical turns toward Afropessimism and posthumanism.

MARUKA CESCHIA is a research fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Edinburgh. She holds a PhD in African American literature from the University of Leeds.
The Winter Dance Party
Poems, 1983–2023

DAVID KIRBY

PRAISE FOR DAVID KIRBY

“The loquacious style of David Kirby’s poetry can sometimes resemble the riffs of a brainy stand-up comedian.”
—New York Times Book Review

“He is a spiling genius of the compound sentence and laugh-aloud funny.” —Booklist

“Kirby’s place among an attentive poetry audience is permanent.” —Library Journal

The Winter Dance Party lays out, not someone’s entire life, but that person’s life as a poet. This enthralling, career-spanning book by the National Book Award finalist David Kirby is made up mainly of new poems along with a generous number of older ones alternating with one another in nine sections that proceed, not chronologically, but more like chapters in a surreal memoir, with long poems followed by short poems, exploratory formats next to more traditional ones, straightforward poems cheek by jowl with ones that are more allusive.

DAVID KIRBY teaches at Florida State University, where he is the Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor of English. His many books include Little Richard: The Birth of Rock ’n’ Roll, described by the Times Literary Supplement as “a hymn of praise to the emancipatory power of nonsense.” In 2016, Kirby received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Florida Humanities, which called him “a literary treasure of our state.”

When I was ten, my mother tucked a dishtowel into my belt, and I bartended my parents’ parties. My dad kept an eye on the bottom line, so he told me to put no more than a jigger of booze in each glass. Once I made a famous writer a bourbon and water and poured him a jigger, too, but he put his hand on mine and kept it there until the drink was made to his satisfaction. After a while, people stopped coming into the kitchen, so I went into the living room, where the husbands sat collapsed on sofas or chairs, looking stunned—except for the famous writer, everybody got one jigger per drink, but you could have as many drinks as you liked. As the men dreamed about their jobs and golf games, I’d steer their tipsy wives around the floor to the sounds of Tony Bennett and Nat King Cole, happy to be up past my bedtime.

—from “Night School”
Ungrafted
New and Selected Poems

CLAUDIA EMERSON

PRAISE FOR CLAUDIA EMERSON

“Smart, intense, satisfying, and approachable.”
—Newsweek

“The sustained quality of her accomplishment, poem by poem, is rare.”—Georgia Review

“Through careful attention to place, the rhythms of speech, and the patterns of a life, Emerson’s poems achieve a living form on the page.”—Harvard Review

“A talent that, despite the Pulitzer, hasn’t received its due.”
—William Logan, New Criterion

The poetry of Claudia Emerson is marked by a precise, evocative handling of subjects drawn from her upbringing in the rural South yet recognizable to readers across cultures: complicated family histories, the eccentricities of place, the frustrations of illness, the pleasures of language and environment. Speakers drawn from history and local settings recount narratives of loss, struggle, and perseverance. The natural world glistens with beauty and vitality. Cancer overtakes the body, producing a suspended state of existence. Everyday objects suggest universal truths and mysteries.

Ungrafted offers more than two dozen previously uncollected poems left in manuscript at the time of Emerson’s death, alongside generous selections from all her previous books. Assembled by her longtime editor Dave Smith, Ungrafted adds a final volume to the legacy of the writer described by the Richmond Times-Dispatch as “one of the most honored, decorated, and revered poets in Virginia history.”

CLAUDIA EMERSON’s poetry collections include Late Wife, Figure Studies, Secure the Shadow, and The Opposite House. Before her death in 2014, she was professor of English and a member of the creative writing faculty at Virginia Commonwealth University. Emerson served as poet laureate of Virginia and won numerous awards for teaching and writing, including the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry.

Early Elegy: Thyroid

She doesn’t need it, they say—no one does—one morning pill its formulary twin—chrysalis-like, synthetic measure of the heart, heat, blood. On the desk, a plastic figure models her small gland’s shape and size—a butterfly’s, like the one resting at the base of her throat, wings open, basking, for now, just above the sternum’s notch, the way it might above a drying puddle.

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Poetry

Southern Messenger Poets
Dave Smith, Series Editor

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“Candy is a jawbreaker: impossible to swallow but a pleasure to savor. In its layers are the flavors of Pope, Keats, Frost, Sagan, Joy Division’s Ian Curtis, but it is Dan Albergotti’s astonishing formal acumen, wit, and engagement with sound that make his examination of mortality and the complexities of forgiveness so sweet.” — Ross White

“Albergotti crafts astute and thoughtful meditations on the imperfectness of life, language, and time, while skillfully displaying his natural ability to breathe new energy into established forms, including the sonnet and the abecedarian.” — January Gill O’Neil

“Albergotti is one of the best practitioners of the most musical branch of contemporary poetry. His poems always rely heavily on, and use to the fullest advantage, a musician’s ear for the phrase, the line, the stanza, and the close. This is the most accomplished book yet by one of my favorite poets to read.” — Chad Davidson

Dan Albergotti’s Candy is a book steeped in sound and silence. Sound in the form of song, of chaotic cacophony, and of the drone (sometimes natural, sometimes manufactured) that creates the ambient soundtrack of history and the seemingly apocalyptic present. Silence in the sense both of the void’s innate quietude and of the failure to speak—of people either dumbstruck or in denial, not speaking because they cannot or will not. Throughout this collection, these sounds and intermittent silences provide the rhythm for poems that question the nature of truth and myth, and that restlessly search for meaning in a reticent universe, ultimately unwilling to take no for an answer as they strive to find an ever-elusive yes.

DAN ALBERGOTTI is the author of The Boatloads and Millennial Teeth. His poems have appeared in many literary journals and have been reprinted in Best American Poetry and Pushcart Prize anthologies. He lives in Tampa, Florida.

Imagine a sibilant song that swims in the soil like a leviathan. Imagine piercing the skin. Imagine chewing fennel, an earthy taste of sweet bitterness, the touching of toes to lips. Imagine there’s no heaven, only a gated garden of bush and tree and grass and flower and grove and growth and beast and bawling child. Imagine losing all that. Imagine a father drinking from a dark cistern of tears.

— from “The Father”
Ever After
Poems

FRED CHAPPELL

PRAISE FOR FRED CHAPPELL

“An immensely gifted, exuberant, versatile writer who should be ranked among our important contemporary voices.”—William Styron

“In learning, scope, and grace, Chappell is one of the truly rare participants in the great conversation that is the Western literary tradition.”—Henry Taylor

“Not since James Agee and Robert Penn Warren has a southern writer displayed such masterful versatility.”—Frank Levering

In his final book, the celebrated poet Fred Chappell reflects on life and the beyond. Details drawn from daily actions, religion, classical myth, and the Appalachian landscape adorn this autumnal collection that unearths connections both strong and tenuous among apparently disparate subjects, all percolated with Chappell’s signature wit and warm vision. A student’s observation that “Poems are how we see with our eyes closed” comes to resemble an icon of sorrow. A stairway to heaven ends with a jug of wine. Memories assume shifting appearances. Often written in traditional sonnet forms, Chappell’s poems display astonishing technical skill and indefatigable humanity as they gaze on the challenges of life and the great unknown.

A spirited and friendly farewell, Ever After shows an accomplished and much-beloved American writer gracing us with poems of remarkable originality, craft, and insight.

Before his death in 2024, FRED CHAPPELL published more than thirty volumes of poetry and prose. Honors bestowed on his work include the Bollingen Prize, the Aiken Taylor Award, the T. S. Eliot Prize, and the Thomas Wolfe Prize. His fiction was translated into more than a dozen languages and received the Best Foreign Book Award from the Académie Française. A native of Canton in the mountains of western North Carolina, Chappell was the state’s poet laureate from 1997 to 2002 and an English professor at the University of North Carolina–Greensboro for forty years.

Reminders

The pieces of itself the sky hurls at us continually—
the mythological starlight,
the homeless orphan meteorite,
silken visions of hazy galaxies,
jetsam of immaterial seas—
these we receive as cool reminder
that every light will shrink to cinder.

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Glance
Poems

CHANDA FELDMAN

PRAISE FOR CHANDA FELDMAN

“Feldman’s quiet, powerful verse unfolds bloom after bloom with a slow seethe. . . . A stumble-proof voice that never leaves a passenger behind.”—Tyehimba Jess

Glance, the second collection of poetry by Chanda Feldman, explores the experiences of a Black and white and Jewish American family that moves abroad to find respite from contemporary racial violence. Spanning diverse landscapes in Israel and the Middle East, Europe, and the United States, the poems grapple with the inability to escape brutalities and prejudices, asking where—and if—it is possible to find a sense of home and community. Feelings of belonging and estrangement, safety and threat, as well as questions of identity, both of the self and the family, drive the speaker to look inward and outward in order to navigate the world. Though never breaking free from their attendant anxieties, Feldman’s poems revel in the beauty of environment and place as they traverse global spaces, from the sea to the city, from the playground to the museum, from orchards to the synagogue, seeking a home in the world.

CHANDA FELDMAN is the author of Approaching the Fields. Her poems have appeared in Best American Poetry, AGNI, Poetry magazine, and the Southern Review, among other publications. She is the recipient of a fellowship in literature from the National Endowment for the Arts and a Stegner Fellowship in poetry from Stanford University. Feldman is associate professor of creative writing at Oberlin College.
Draw Me without Boundaries

MARGARET GIBSON

“Draw Me without Boundaries is a fluid and eloquent meditation that embodies the wisdom of a life lived with wonder and with ethical attention and consideration. Everything we might hope for in a book from Margaret Gibson, these brilliantly lyrical monologues and her dramatic throughlines, as intimate as they are archetypal, invite comparison to Virginia Woolf’s The Waves.”—Paula Closson Buck

“In these intimate, truth-telling poems, Gibson has conjured two lives out of the air and made them indelible. I greatly admire the range, depth, and subtle strangeness in the thrilling counterpoint of their voices, which sing as they investigate youth and age, love and loss, and their last days together on a wounded earth.”—Chase Twichell

“Expanding her mastery as a lyric and meditative writer, Gibson has given us a remarkable book, full of gratitude for what is here and goes on (in all its infinite manifestations) and regret for what is always being lost.”—Robert Cording

Powerful love between a grandmother and a granddaughter animates the voices in this poignant series of inner monologues set against the backdrop of global climate crisis and the COVID pandemic. Margaret Gibson’s Draw Me without Boundaries lays bare the integrity and depth of inquiry it takes to make life and death choices in a broken world. This luminous book—innovative, suspenseful, deeply moving—reflects in conjoined poetry and prose the profound issues of our time.

MARGARET GIBSON, the poet laureate of Connecticut from 2019 to 2022, is the author of fourteen collections of poems, including The Vigil, a finalist for the National Book Award. Her honors include the Lamont Poetry Selection, the Melville Kane Award, and two Connecticut Book Awards. She is the editor of Waking Up to the Earth: Connecticut Poets in a Time of Global Climate Crisis.

There is a drawing, framed and on the wall in her room, just inside, by the door.

She likes to stop and look at it, ignoring the aide at her side who worries that standing too long in one spot will tire her.

She draws the drawing into herself, she lets it drop down into the depths of her solitude as she looks at the snow fields on both sides of a road whose borders are softened by drifts of snow, and the road, the road seems to flow beyond the limits of her vision, more river than road.

Zoe drew it, the road that flows.

—from Draw Me without Boundaries

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Poetry

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978-0-8071-7563-7
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“In Mother Water Ash, Nicole Cooley mourns the death of her mother from the familiar and doomed landscape of New Orleans. These poems overflow with an essential truth: beloved people will change and disappear, while slightly more permanent cities, rivers, and levees have the audacity to go on without us. Read these haunting poems and weep.”
—Alison Pelegrin

“A mother’s body dies, disappears, is burned, but other bodies remain: daughters, granddaughters, a widower—bodies of water that run through and around New Orleans, both touching down and moving on. This book too is a body, a flood, a torrential downpour enough to alter a landscape and any sense of home, reminding us that all memories erode.”—Timothy Liu

“The remarkable poems in this collection linger in remaking the world after the known world is lost. This is powerful poetry that attends to what we pass on in what seem to be unbearable aftermaths. The book, in all its grief, is paean to life somehow someway.”—Tonya M. Foster

Mother Water Ash, a wrenching new collection of poems by Nicole Cooley, explores the personal grief of a mother’s sudden death alongside the environmental crises of the storms, fires, and floods that now dominate our world. Examining the landscapes of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, these poems ponder what it means to mourn in the face of ecological catastrophe, and traipse the terrains left by loss.

Nicole Cooley is the author of six books of poems, including Of Marriage and Girl after Girl after Girl. Her first book, Resurrection, won the Walt Whitman Award. Raised in New Orleans, Cooley is professor of English in the MFA Program for Creative Writing and Literary Translation at Queens College, CUNY, and lives outside of New York City with her family.

New Orleans is the place
around which I uselessly orbit after Katrina typing
my mother’s name Missing Person Jacki Cooley
into search engines sixteen years ago my daughters asked
what is a hurricane’s eye what can it see
then my mother was alive refusing to leave the city
now I text my father how high is the water are there
tomatoes
phone and electric out I wish for a slick of river
to spare our house while in a new dream about my
mother
she thrashes to the Gulf’s sand floor where she can’t
burn or come apart

—from “Sixteen Years to the Day Another Hurricane Reverses”
Death Benefits
A Century of Sonnets

DAVID R. SLAVITT

PRAISE FOR DAVID R. SLAVITT
“Slavitt’s touch is light, and he writes beautifully. . . . His satire is sharp and he can be wildly funny.”—New York Times Book Review

“A serious force in contemporary letters. . . . Witty, graceful, and accessible.”—Virginia Quarterly Review

“Slavitt is a reassuring polymath; rather than making you anxious, he comforts you with his knowledge.”—Hollins Critic

Death Benefits deepens and extends David R. Slavitt’s sublime, lyric confrontation with mortality—and does so in a plainspoken and marvelously entertaining, conversational way. His poetry encourages us to recognize our own predicaments, as we see ourselves reflected as fellow sufferers entrapped by daily circumstance. In his new collection, Slavitt presents a sequence of one hundred sonnets, each one loaded with life, observation, and quicksilver wit. Readers will delight in looking on with wonder, at every turn of the page, to see how the poet will pull it off this time and what kind of linguistic magic he will use to fend off the mortal pain of getting through each day. His voice plays over the grid of the meter in utterly natural intonations. His music squarely faces the dark, but its enduring note is faith in common sense and the pleasure that poetry provides, rather than cynicism or despair.

DAVID R. SLAVITT has published 130 books of poetry, fiction, and translation. Born in White Plains, New York, and educated at Andover, Yale, and Columbia, Slavitt has worked at Newsweek and taught at Temple University, Columbia, the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, and Bennington College.

1
A paragraph signals a pause; a more emphatic break you can indicate with an extra space; stronger yet, you can start the following line in bold face—to congratulate the reader for having reached this milestone. It is a goal because he could not help taking notice that a little down the page were darker letters. (Does he suppose he now deserves a rest?)

Childish. But aren’t all punctuation marks condescending? Can we admit that we need such prompts without losing face? Confess that we remain dependent on the help the cantillation of grammar offers beginners. And we are always beginners, again and again.

—from Death Benefits

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