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## REVIEW: Gourd Girls

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## Off the SHELF

The Georgia Library Quarterly reviews books on aspects of life in Georgia and the South, including history, literature, politics, education and genealogy. Materials written by Southern authors or published by regional publishers may also be considered, as well as those on libraries and librarianship.

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### NON-FICTION

#### **A Bone to Pick: Everyone's Guide to Gourmet Venison Cookery** by

Gary D. Grossman (Elliott & Fitzpatrick, Inc., 2007; ISBN 978-1-4243-0723-4, \$18.95).



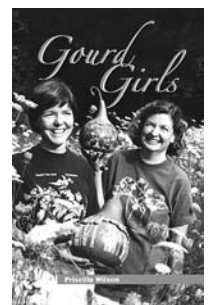
Venison is personally evocative of my childhood in the woods of northern Michigan. To this day, the school district there counts the first day of deer-hunting season as a holiday. The phalanx of hunters who ascended to our sleepy town ("flat-landers," we called them) were an unwelcome disruption who could be counted on to leave a perfectly good venison rotting in a field — missing only the antlers, which undoubtedly hung in some Grosse Pointe game room. With this work, Gary Grossman manages to align with the sportsmen and women who hunt for the table, not the wall. The recipes are straightforward with clear, concise directions, arranged in seven chapters by type (soup, stews, roasts, etc.). The table of contents has acknowledgements as well as preparation/preservation notes. Middle-Eastern venison meatloaf, venison fried rice, and Mexican venison stew are just a sampling of the continental culinary options; more advanced cooks may want to attempt the venison in red mole with its 20-ingredient sauce. Reference to a butchering pamphlet is helpfully provided, but the author mysteriously neglects to name resources for procuring butchered venison ready to cook. Shopping for unusual meats can be daunting; guidance and suggestion would be helpful. In *A Bone to Pick*, Grossman

aptly combines the 21st century denizen's taste for the exotic with the 19th century poacher's palate. Additionally, the charming illustrations and textual colloquialisms (i.e. "Serves: a bunch of folks") combine to evoke nothing so much as the 1970's country idyll typified by the success of both Grizzly Adams and Jimmy Carter. The volume is coated, conveniently spiral bound, includes space for personal notes at the end of each recipe, and is suitable for public libraries, culinary schools and private collections alike. ►►

— Reviewed by **Jewell Anderson**  
*Armstrong Atlantic State University*

**Gourd Girls** by Priscilla Wilson (Mt. Yonah Press, 2005; ISBN 0-9651-1967-X, \$11.95).

*Gourd Girls* is Priscilla Wilson's richly told memoir of her 30-year business and personal partnership with Janice Lymburner. It is the story of two girls barely out of college who, through good karma and the kindness of others, wind up creating a life that allows them to live simply, artistically and on their own terms. Short on money but full of love for each other and their desire to live and work together, Priscilla sets out to revive an old art, gourd carving, while Janice continues to teach and bring in a small but steady income. Priscilla's account of the trials and errors involved in gourd farming and collecting is at once hilarious and poignant. As the women battle bad soil, unfamiliar machinery and a lack of knowledge about farming in general, the Mount

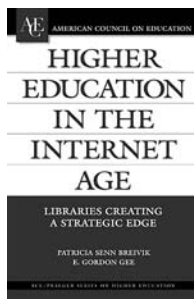


Yonah community comes forward to help “the girls” hang on and make their business a success. With pageantry and good humor, Priscilla and Janice host harvesting parties, invent wacky gourd displays and share their home and hearts with neighbors and folks just passing through. But life wasn’t always fun and games for the pair, who struggled for years with fear of coming out of the closet, at a time when many people in larger and more liberal areas of the country would not. Not knowing what would happen, but with trust in their community and a willingness to accept the consequences, the couple’s desire to live authentically finally helps them stop hiding. *Gourd Girls* is an inspiring memoir, frankly told and generously packed with anecdotes about life in rural northeast Georgia. It will be a welcome addition to public library collections in Georgia. ►►

— Reviewed by **Teresa Pacheco**  
*Northeast Georgia Health System*

### Higher Education in the Internet

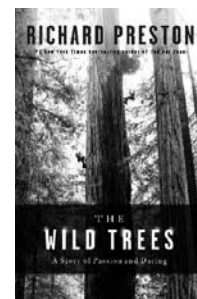
*Age* by Patricia Senn Brevik and E. Gordon Gee (American Council on Education, 2006; ISBN 0-275-98194-0, \$49.95).



This edition is a revised and updated version of the 1989 *Information Literacy: Revolution in the Library*. The information covered is a result of the successful collaboration between the authors: a visionary and experienced library dean and an innovative university president. This partnership of university administrators is one of three key components that Brevik and Gee feel are essential in higher education today. The ability that libraries have to facilitate change and to develop a shared vision of the future are listed as imperative components for the evolution of education. In the age of information, the authors see an enormous potential for libraries to play a strategic role in achieving campus goals. Additional highlights include trends in reforming instruction, service, and leadership, and a discussion of funding alternatives and cost considerations. The material is relevant to all phases and levels of higher education in its review of the importance of resource-based instruction, implications of the Internet, research productivity, service to the community, collections/digitization, and leadership. This is a scholarly work, with each chapter yielding notes and references for further research. Individual examples and case studies are included to illustrate initiatives and offer a range of creative solutions. ►►

— Reviewed by **Dr. Rachel A. Schipper**  
*Georgia College & State University*

**Wild Trees: A Story of Passion and Daring** by Richard Preston (Random House, 2007; ISBN 1-4000-6489-9, \$25.95).

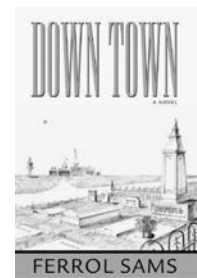


Botanists estimate that the largest redwoods are more than 2,000 years old, but dating by annual growth rings is not possible, because the oldest redwoods are hollow. The tallest are between 350 to 380 feet high, 35 to 38 stories. Until the 1980s, when humans first began exploring the giant redwoods, it was assumed that life was sparse in the canopy of the redwood forest. In fact, the trees’ first explorers found whole ecosystems of life, including the expected lichens, ferns and insects, but also voles, salamanders, huckleberries and even other trees, such as laurel and hemlock. In *Wild Trees*, the story of the exploration of individual trees as if they were mountains or countries is told as Preston follows the botanists and naturalists who climb the largest and tallest organisms in the world. The personal stories of the tree-climbing scientists who search for the tallest trees are interspersed with the history of the redwood forest, the ecology of the forest floor and the canopies of the trees, and the techniques and gear of climbing as a sport. To research this book, Preston learned how to climb giant trees himself and even camped out in them. While the sometimes forced re-enactments of the climbing expeditions become repetitious, the account of the lost world of the tree-top environment is compelling and showcases Preston’s ability to draw wonder and drama from the science of his topic. ►►

— Reviewed by **Karen Minton**  
*GALILEO Support Services, Library Services*

## FICTION

**Down Town** by Ferrol Sams (Mercer University Press, 2007; ISBN: 0881460729, \$25.00).



A ride with Ferroll Sams *Down Town* is a trip unlike any you can imagine. This tale is told through the eyes of life-long resident James Aloysius “Buster” Holcombe Jr. It is a humorous and poignant tapestry of narratives set in a small Georgia town. Sams uses a full arsenal of wit, wisdom and plain old Southern charm to engage his readers in the lives of an unforgettable set of characters.