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REVIEW: Orange Mint and Honey

Katrina Cooks

Augusta Technical College Library

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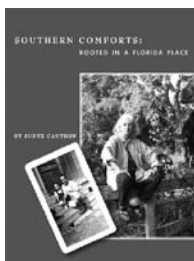
mind," the highly technical presentation of ideas demands a specialized vocabulary and a somewhat rarefied openness to applying statistics to the study of literature. This book would be a good addition to academic libraries where linguistics is a primary focus. It would also be appropriate for inclusion in collections with an emphasis on Georgia studies or Southern literature.

— Reviewed by **Leslie R. G. Bullington**
Augusta, Georgia

Southern Comforts: Rooted in a Southern Place by *Sudye Cauthen*
(University of Georgia Press, 2007; ISBN 1-9300-6658-9, \$29.95).

In 1974, following a divorce and the death of her father, Sudye Cauthen moved herself and her 9-year-old son to a cabin on Waters Pond, near her childhood home in Alachua in the interior of northern Florida. Eventually, at the urging of her mother, she moved all the way back to Alachua, prompting a re-examination of her childhood. Disheartened by the changes in her hometown, Cauthen subsequently spent years driving back roads, sometimes at random, sometimes deliberately, seeking the people and places she had known. The author filled in gaps in her understanding of her own family history as well as the history of the region and its people. The result, *Southern Comforts*, is a combination of memoir, interviews, natural history and folklore. These individual elements combine to form a snapshot of a time when tobacco was king, and people both shaped the land and were shaped by it. Pair this with Janisse Ray's *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* for a portrait of southern Georgia and northern Florida before Disney and interstate highways forever altered the identity of the region. Recommended for academic and large public libraries.

— Reviewed by **Kathy Pillatzki**
Henry County Public Library System



assistant to her elderly mother. Given her willful and unpleasant behavior as a child, Josey feels obligated to be at her mother's constant beck and call, and her mother happily accepts Josey's feelings of obligation. Interspersed with her daughterly duties, Josey goes on a sandwich run for the woman in the closet, Della Lee, and meets Chloe, who has her own unique situation. Books literally appear to Chloe: They follow her, turn up when she most needs them. Josey and Chloe bond over their respective love troubles: Josey is in love with the enigmatic mailman, and Chloe is on the verge of a breakup with her lawyer boyfriend due to his cheating on her one night after a particularly difficult case. The mailman and the lawyer are best friends, a fact that further complicates matters yet also ties them together even more closely. In the small ski town of Bald Slope, N.C., everyone knows everybody else. Josey's father was the founder of the town, resulting in most of the residents knowing her from the time of her birth, witnessing her disagreeable behavior as a child and seemingly unwilling to forget any of it. This relationship between Josey and the town illustrates a disadvantage of small-town life. Throughout the course of the novel, Allen deftly employs magical realism, adding an element of mystery and beauty to the compulsively readable story. Recommended for public libraries and academic libraries with a contemporary fiction section.

— Reviewed by **Carol Malcolm**
Riverside Military Academy

Orange Mint and Honey by *Carleen Brice*
(One World Ballantine Books, 2008; ISBN 978-0-345-49906-6, \$14.00).

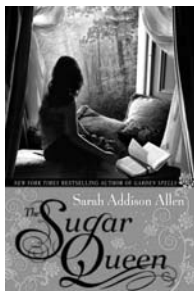
Carleen Brice's first novel is a heartwarming story about redemption, forgiveness and finding that going back home again can be less bitter when it is followed by something sweet. Shay Dixon is a graduate student who is on the verge of a nervous breakdown and broke. Taking the advice of blues singer Nina Simone, her spiritual adviser, Shay goes back home to a mother whom she had written off. Nona, Shay's mother, was once an alcoholic who left Shay alone a lot and when around was either drunk or hungover. However, after Shay returns home, she meets the new Nona who loves to garden, has a 5-year-old daughter and a new lease on life. This novel takes a look at the relationship between a mother and daughter who have a past that needs forgiveness in order to heal and move on. The novel addresses many issues in a way that will be engaging and endearing to the reader. Brice's storytelling will have the reader crying one minute and laughing the



FICTION

The Sugar Queen by *Sarah Addison Allen*
(Bantam, 2008; ISBN 978-0-5538-0549-9, \$22.00).

Most of us have never woken up and found a woman living in our closet, but this does happen to Josey, the main character of Allen's engrossing second novel. As surprising and unusual as this event is, Josey has an even more challenging concern: serving as a personal



next. The journey of Shay and Nona is a lighthearted read that will allow the reader to see the importance of facing and embracing our past hurts in order to enjoy what life has in store for us. This book will appeal to women of all ages, races and economic classes. This book of fiction also supplies the reader with a small treat: Nona's Orange Mint Tea and Orange Mint and Honey Butter Cookie recipes.

— Reviewed by **Katrina Cooks**
Augusta Technical College Library

JUVENILE

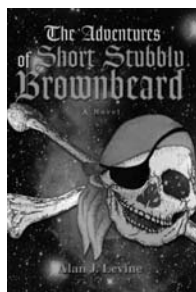
Flamingo's First Christmas by Nancy Raines Day; Illustrated by Fiona Robinson (Harry N. Abrams, 2005; ISBN: 0-8109-5765-5, \$15.95).



Red and green lights at Christmas time — what's so strange about that? Well, if you're a flamingo living in the bright, hot sands of Miami, it's all new to you. In this charming story, author Nancy Day's character, Flamingo, sets out to answer the question, "What is Christmas?" The reader journeys along with Flamingo as he searches for Christmas in a line of children waiting to see Santa, in busy holiday shopping traffic, and in an expensive department store. It isn't until Flamingo stumbles upon a live Nativity play that he truly begins to understand the meaning of Christmas. Day's humorous take on the frustrations of the season through the eyes of her feathered protagonist is a joy and provides a nice juxtaposition to the poignancy of the Nativity scene ending the story. Illustrator Fiona Robinson uses interesting techniques, such as transferring pencil drawings via carbon, which she fills in with oil paints. The illustrations reflect the bright, whimsical atmosphere of Miami at Christmas time and are perfect for Flamingo's adventures. In the Nativity scene, Donkey comments that, "Maybe a flamingo is exactly what we need in our Nativity play." Donkey has the right idea. Recommended for most children's collections.

— Reviewed by **Tracy Walker**
Dawson County Public Library

The Adventures of Short Stubbly Brownbeard by Alan J. Levine (iUniverse, Inc., 2006, ISBN 0-595-39248-2, \$17.95).



Get ready to set sail for adventure! Atlanta author Alan J. Levine has written an exciting book that combines science fiction and pirate adventure. Short Stubbly Brownbeard

is the lesser-known cousin of Blackbeard the Pirate. Brownbeard begins life as an accountant, but a late-night sword fight with an angry group of numbers prompts him to become a pirate. He locates a ship, the For Sale, and gathers a crew consisting of a Sand Witch, a Troll, a Sock Gremlin and a talking cat. Brownbeard and his dysfunctional crew head to the galaxy of Sa'Laam, where they plan to rob the wealthy emperor. They meet some unusual characters along the way and uncover a terrible secret behind the vast wealth of Sa'Laam. Brownbeard and his crew must search within themselves for the courage to fight for what is right, even if it means a fight to the death. Although the story itself is wildly fantastical, there are many parallels to the real world. This book would be enjoyed by anyone who reads science fiction and would be right at home in either a high school media center or a public library.

— Reviewed by **Andrea Thigpen**
Wacona Elementary School

The Sorta Sisters by Adrian Fogelin (Peachtree Publishers, 2007; ISBN 978-1-5614-5424-2, \$15.95).



Mica Delano lives onboard the *Martina* with her father, Dr. Robin Michael Delano, an alcoholic marine biologist who is so wrapped up in his work he rarely notices his daughter. Anna Casey lives in Tallahassee, Fla., with her foster mother, Miss Johnette, a high school biology teacher. Though the girls have never met, they have a lot in common. Both girls have moved many times and have difficulty making friends. They are both very intelligent and have a love of science. Both long to have a real friend and to be a part of the crowd. At the beginning of the book, Anna receives a letter from Mica by way of Ben Floyd, who met Mica while visiting his Aunt Emma in Key West. Aunt Emma runs the marina where the *Martina* is currently docked and serves as somewhat of a surrogate mother to Mica. While Ben is visiting in Key West, he realizes that Mica reminds him of Anna and tells her all about the girl back home. Mica thinks that Anna sounds like her kindred spirit and decides they need to become friends. She writes the letter to Anna and includes a janthina shell as a gift. The girls begin to exchange letters and scientific specimens and develop a great bond. Since neither has siblings, they agree they should be sorta sisters. Through letters, they share their hopes, fears, struggles and insecurities and hope to one day meet. This book is highly recommended for middle school girls and Fogelin fans. The characters are real, and readers will be drawn in by the vivid descriptions of the Florida scenery.

— Reviewed by **Nikki Terrell**
Lowndes Middle School Media Center