

Winter 1-7-2016

Heading South to Teach: The World of Susan Nye Hutchinson, 1815-1845

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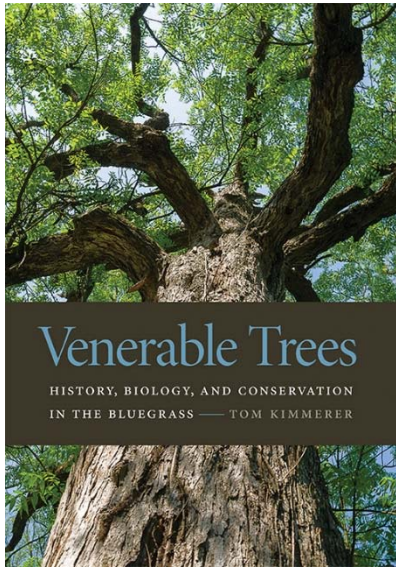
Recommended Citation

Jordan, Carol Walker (2016) "Heading South to Teach: The World of Susan Nye Hutchinson, 1815-1845," *The Southeastern Librarian*: Vol. 63 : Iss. 4 , Article 7.

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Venerable Trees: History, Biology, and Conservation in the Bluegrass. Tom Kimmerer, Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2015. ISBN 978-0-8131-6566-0. \$39.95.



Tom Kimmerer is an author who can “paint a picture with a few words” when he is writing about venerable trees. His early comments in this fascinating book about the trees of the “bluegrass of Kentucky” (p. 1) touch the heart of any tree lover or preservationist of old trees. He says, “People in all cultures revere large, old trees. From temple trees in Southeast Asia to the giant sequoia and coast redwood groves of the American West, people visit, worship, and love trees. Trees are venerated—held in awe and esteem.” (p. 1) As he reflects upon his love of an old American beech tree of his childhood, it is clear to see how his life’s passion was formed to make him a tree physiologist and a forest scientist.

Uncovering for the reader what is unique about the Bluegrass Region of Kentucky and its venerable trees, Kimmerer takes us to the landscapes of Kentucky, once occupied by bison and habited today by venerable trees. From the intricate descriptions of large grassy areas ringed by venerable trees to examples of dedication of enthusiastic preservationists of Bluegrass Kentucky, we learn of efforts to venerate, to protect, and to replenish the tree canopy of the Bluegrass.

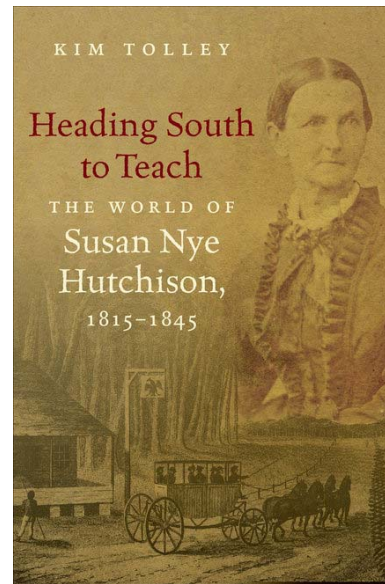
Providing us with more than 100 color photographs and the use of historical documents, this book is a critical volume for public and university libraries. Particularly of interest to young readers are the tidbits we uncover as we wonder “is the grass really blue?” and “was “blue grass music” born in Kentucky?” “where did the bison of the Bluegrass come from?” “why are there so many old venerable trees still standing in the bluegrass region of Kentucky?”

I remember a favorite poem we learned in elementary school...“I think that I shall never see. A poem lovely as a tree.” (Joyce Kilmer, *Poetry*, August 1913) ...I was drawn

to Kimmerer’s book as I am a tree lover and my neighborhood has preserved what I refer to as our “dynasty tree”....Maybe I’ll change its name to our venerable tree?....

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Heading South to Teach: The World of Susan Nye Hutchinson 1815-1845. Kim Tolley. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015. ISBN 978-1-4696-2433-4.



Kim Tolley, a Professor of Education at Notre Dame de Namur University, documents her writing through the journals of Susan Nye Hutchinson, 1790-1867. These journals guided her research and the writing of the book, “Heading South to Teach: The World of Susan Nye Hutchinson 1815-1845”. Tolley found in the South in those days the cultural, political, religious and social issues that brought alive a dark side of history. Hutchinson’s goal of being an educator in the Southern States after the Revolutionary War was never in doubt but the roadblocks were evident as the journals explain.

Life struggles with travel, teaching, marriage, children and financial security between 1815 and 1845 at times portray a horrific battle to live her dreams of a family, a career, and the goal of being an effective educator. One scene that lives on with this reader is the one Tolley describes of Hutchinson praying with slaves and free blacks in the streets of Raleigh. Hutchinson knew she was in great danger since teaching reading and prayers to slaves and free Blacks was forbidden.

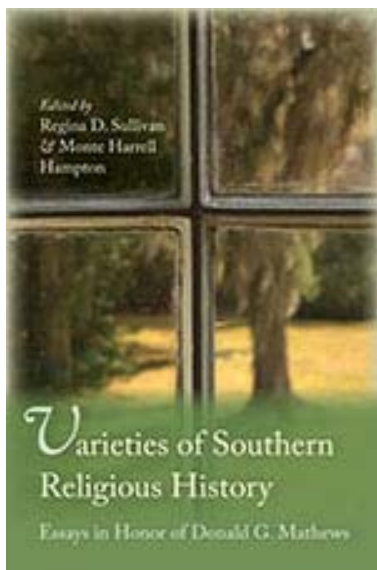
Following Hutchinson’s life as provided in the 30 years of her journals brings a reader to see the life of a woman

determined as women are today to “have it all”—a career, a family, a marriage, and financial security. Today’s women are spared the evil Susan Nye Hutchinson saw in the slave owner’s treatment of a slave—man’s inhumanity to man on a scale beyond my imagination. Examining the social, cultural and political times, Tolley documents the stories that can enrich the journal writings for the reader.

This book is an excellent acquisition for any college and university women’s studies collection. Additionally faculty and administrators of colleges and schools will find fascination with the southern educational structures of the times after the Revolutionary War. See pages 195 to 257 for Notes, Bibliography and Index.

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Varieties of Southern Religious History: Essays in Honor of Donald G. Mathews. Edited by Regina D. Sullivan and Monte Harrell Hampton. Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2015. ISBN 978-1-61117-488-5. \$54.95.



Varieties of Southern Religious History: Essays in Honor of Donald G. Mathews is comprised of fifteen chapters written by former students of renowned historian Donald G. Mathews. A distinguished Professor Emeritus of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Mathews is known for his pioneering research on the religious and social history of the Southern United States. In a tribute to their mentor’s influence and scholarship, these historians address the many complexities that have shaped Southern religious history.

The editors, Regina D. Sullivan and Monte Harrell Hampton, have chosen a wide range of essays that explore topics such as race, gender, politics, regionalism, and death. These offerings are organized chronologically, beginning with the 18th century evangelical experience in early

America and ending with the significance of religion in the ever-changing political climate of the 1960s.

The first essays discuss the political and social consequences of early efforts to deal with race and religion in the South. Attempts by men like Henry Evans to integrate churches had mixed and short-lived results (“*The Greatest Curiosity: Race, Religion, and Politics in Henry Evan’s Methodist Church, 1785-1858*,” Monte Harrell Hampton). Evans, a Methodist minister and free black man, established the Metropolitan AME Zion Church in Fayetteville, North Carolina, which recruited both black and white members who appreciated his expressive, emotionally charged style of worship. Yet within a few decades of his death, the congregation would be almost entirely segregated, foregoing its legacy of “racial brotherhood,” as white Southerners sought to maintain racial lines in the years before the Civil War.

Spiritual disillusionment and the hope for a better life often led to the search for charismatic leaders and several essays highlight examples of these magnetic personalities. Born into slavery in Southampton, Virginia, Nat Turner connected mystical visions and unusual natural phenomena with the eminent apocalypse (*Nat Turner and Signs of the Apocalypse*, Wayne K. Durrill). These visions, occurring between 1827 and 1831, were considered by Turner to be messages from God, and inspired him to lead the largest slave insurrection in American history. The same anticipation of the End of Days can be seen in the essay concerning New York Baptist preacher William Miller who was compelled to spread the message that Jesus would soon return, specifically in 1843 (*Neither Cult nor Charisma: William Miller and Leadership of New Religious Movements*, Ruth Alden Doan). Beginning as a regional group, Millerism soon spread throughout the country, resulting in a movement that would ultimately eclipse its founder.

The religious and the social history of the country are reflected in essays that capture the emergence of women as integral parts of the evangelical dialogue. The story of Frances Bumpass, editor of the *Weekly Message*, captures a moment in women’s history that coincided with preconceived notions of women’s roles in religion and the workforce (“*Ladies, Arise! The World Has Need of You: The Widow Bumpass’s Newspaper War*,” Cheryl F. Junk). By encouraging women to take their place in Southern Methodist religious services, she became embroiled in what became known as the “newspaper wars,” pitting the editor of the *Richmond Christian Advocate*, against the clergymen who supported her.

Religion continued to be an important platform for change and several essays illustrate the tug of war between Catholicism and the Protestant church, and how this conflict played out in 20th century politics (*Nationalism, Marxism, and the Christian Reformed Church in Cuba*, Daniel R. Miller and *Preachers and Politics: The Religious Issue in the North Carolina Presidential Campaign of 1960 -- a Footnote on Al Smith*, Gerald Lee Wilson). These accounts reflect the struggle for religious identity and