

10-1-2017

From the Desk of the Dean: The History and Future of Arts and Sciences Education

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Recommended Citation

Dean, Peter R. (2017) "From the Desk of the Dean: The History and Future of Arts and Sciences Education," *The Southeastern Librarian*: Vol. 65 : Iss. 3 , Article 12.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/seln/vol65/iss3/12>

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In the years leading to the Centennial of the Battle of New Orleans, the growing romantic narrative was enthusiastically perpetuated by patriotic organizations such as the United Daughters of 1812. In his chapter "One Hundred Years of Old Hickory and Cotton Bales: The Battle of New Orleans Centennial Celebration," Joseph F. Stoltz traces the rise of women's organizations in the late 19th century and their role in shaping the collective historical memory of the country. Understandably, the New Orleans branch of the Daughters of 1812 grew rapidly in the years preceding the Centennial, due in large part to their commitment to build a monument commemorating the Battle of New Orleans. Yet, upon completing the impressive Chalmette Monument, the Daughters faced challenges such as pushback from local industry, a lack of funds, and the site's difficult tourist access. Other memorials to the War of 1812 were also encountering difficulties, even ones planned in Jackson's home state of Tennessee. Ultimately, it fell to the Ladies Hermitage Association (LHA) to solidify their state's hero, Andrew Jackson, in popular memory. This was done not only through monuments, but also by controlling the narrative of the Battle of New Orleans in the minds of future generations. Stoltz recounts the efforts of the LHA to direct the narrative in school textbooks, and through events such as organized children's essay contests, thereby securing the hold of Jackson and his victory in the public's imagination and memory.

One of the more entertaining chapters of the book features the war through a musical lens. "The Battle of New Orleans in Popular Music and Culture," by Tracey E. W. Laird, explores songs that were actually written during the War of 1812, as well as ones that continued to tell the story well over a century after the fact. Laird begins by dissecting Johnny Horton's popular song, "The Battle of New Orleans." Based on words written by Jimmy Driftwood, an Arkansas school principal in 1936, with music based on the tune "Eighth of January," this catchy song rose to number 1 on the Billboard charts for the year 1959. The comedic lyrics tell the story of the conflict from an American soldier's point of view, and reflect the continuing mythology of the battle. The author then discusses important national songs actually written during the war years, namely, "Hail to the Chief" and "The Star-Spangled Banner." Music, plays, poetry, and art helped perpetuate the memory of the war and the heroism of Andrew Jackson. Laird believes that this might be due to the dramatic and colorful accounts that emerged from the Battle of New Orleans. Stories that built the mythology of an outnumbered heroic band of American soldier toting Kentucky rifles soundly trouncing the British army in the exotic Louisiana swamps served as a solid platform to build a popular collective narrative. Andrew Jackson was lionized as a strategic genius and man of the people. Of course, the modern view of Andrew Jackson has pivoted in the collective memory, and the author uses the musical *Bloody, Bloody Andrew Jackson* as an illustration of how it has been adapted into popular culture.

The scholarly essays that comprise *The Battle of New Orleans in History and Memory* encourage the reader to

consider the true significance of the War of 1812, its heroes, and its place within the country's collective memory. The range of topics included within the book will definitely hold the interest of both historians and students of American history, and provide valuable perspectives on how generations have shaped the memory and mythology of a politically and economically complicated war.

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From the Desk of the Dean: The History and Future of Arts and Sciences Education. Mary Anne Fitzpatrick and Elizabeth A. Say, eds.. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2017. ISBN 978-1-61117-841-8 (Hardcover, \$24.99); ISBN 978-1-61117-842-5 (Ebook, \$24.99). 196 p.



As the title implies, this book is a comprehensive look at both the past, present and future of higher education in the United States.

Editors Elizabeth A. Say, who is currently a dean of humanities at California State University at Northridge, and Mary Anne Fitzpatrick, a former dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of South Carolina, have assembled a collection of nine essays by other deans and former deans on both the state of higher education today as well as the debate about the importance of the liberal arts and sciences (versus an education with a vocational focus.)

Say and Fitzpatrick note that the deans themselves are faculty members who are the appointed leaders of their universities, and hence their opinions on this topic are particularly relevant.

The publication of the book coincides with the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Council of the College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS), the largest association of Arts and Sciences Deans in the country.

The book discusses the tension between two competing views of what higher education should be about: a place where the general public can go to get a degree that will

boost their lifetime salary earnings (an argument made by Higher Education itself); versus a place where the “core of liberal arts” itself—a mastery of grammar, rhetoric and logic—in order to develop more “flexible” and “creative” citizens of the world.

This book also focuses on other practical considerations of higher education: the rising cost of a college degree; the role of community colleges; the considerable increase in part-time adjunct faculty used to educate future leaders; and the evolution of colleges and universities into complex organizations.

“From the Desk of the Dean” is a well written book that would give not only university administrators and faculty a good idea of where education is going (as well as where it came from). It is highly recommended academic libraries and public libraries.

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