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Copies, Surrogates, and the Simulacra: The Digitization of Rare Books and Manuscripts for Research Purposes

Joseph Shankweiler

Joseph Shankweiler is the Special Collections Catalog Librarian at Western Kentucky University. He can be reached at josephj.shankweiler@wku.edu.

In the last fifteen years, digitization of rare books and manuscripts in special collections libraries has begun to play an increasingly significant role in providing access for students, faculty, independent scholars and members of local and academic communities. The digitization of print materials is now frequently undertaken for a variety of purposes and with varying degrees of success. Libraries digitize manuscripts and rare books to promote known and hidden collections, preserve fragile materials, and provide on and off-campus access to users, while new uses and possibilities are continually being explored and implemented. Some early scholarship on the subject, however, has expressed both excitement and concern about what the digitization of rare books and manuscripts means for the future of special collections libraries. Given the mix of both anxious and optimistic projections, what does digitization mean for user's perception of physical collections in terms of their purpose, usefulness, and essentially value in a world where digital surrogates are widely available? While much scholarship can be found on the subjects of copyright, fair use, and standard digitization practices as the field continues to grow and evolve, the following is a discussion on how these developments affect the ways in which users perceive and experience books as a physical object; how digital surrogates are encountered; and their potential in serving as a substitute or stand in for primary sources.

Early scholarship on the subject tends to reflect a dual sense of anxiety and hopeful anticipation about the possibilities of digitization in special collections libraries. One clear example can be found in Peter Hirtle's 2002 article, "The Impact of Digitization on Special Collections in Libraries," where he sardonically draws connections between the Manhattan Project's creation of the first atom bomb and the advent of digitization in special collections libraries. Hirtle suggests that the advancement of digital technologies has created tremendous potential for special collections libraries; though he nevertheless questions whether we as librarians might now be complicit in our own eventual undoing. Hirtle suggests that, with the implementation of digitization in special collections, we have reached a point of no return. He states, "... the accomplishments of the past decade in digitization represent a true technological advancement, one with the potential to alter forever the world of special collections as it now exists" (Hirtle, 2002, p. 43). While Hirtle's outlook for the future of rare books and special collections libraries appears quite grim, later scholarship tends to reflect similar sentiments. In her presentation, "Books in the Age of Anxiety," given at the 2009 *Books in Hard Times*, Grolier Club Symposium, Katherine Reagan suggests two possible

outcomes digitization could have on special collections libraries. The first scenario, she refers to as "The Special Collections Graveyard," foresees special collections libraries "becom[ing] vast warehouses containing physical artifacts few will desire to see, once their digitized surrogates are made freely and globally available" (Reagan, 2009, para 5). The second, more optimistic "Special Collections Renaissance" scenario, is one in which special collections "remain the one true locus for authenticity and scholarly activity" (Reagan, 2009, para 6). In this model, Reagan suggests, "our online arsenals of searchable full-text and digital facsimiles will, on the contrary, spur ever greater desires to study, view, touch, smell, and experience increasingly precious originals" (Reagan, 2009, para 6). The common theme in both Hirtle and Reagan's assessments is that special collections libraries have undeniably been undergoing a sea change due to the advancement of digital technologies.

While there continues to be an ongoing concern about how the ubiquity of digital surrogates affects the ways in which users and scholars regard their physical counterparts, overall opinions tend to resemble the "special collections renaissance" scenario and focus on the potential for new audiences and research opportunities. In her article, "Digital Special Collections: The Big Picture," Alice Prochaska notes that "Making high-quality images of special collections available on the Internet has opened up for archivists, curators, and librarians some dizzying possibilities" (2009, p. 13). She continues, "we are able to pursue high ideals for sharing a common cultural and historical inheritance by digitizing rare and unique materials for a worldwide audience" (2009, p. 13). Prochaska, like most librarians, sees the potential of digitization to dramatically expand usership far beyond the constraints of the physical library. Similarly, Hirtle notes several potential positives for the use of digitization in special collections libraries. He argues that digitized materials create "new users" and "new uses" and predicts that with digital technologies we will see "the appearance of new types of researchers using rare books and manuscripts" (Hirtle, 2002, p. 43). Hirtle notes that digital surrogates have the potential to create new opportunities for researchers that might not otherwise be feasible (or would at least be significantly more difficult) without digital technology. For example, high quality scans now allow us to examine manuscripts on a microscopic level, and discover characteristics, traits, and information that are less apparent or often invisible to the naked eye. More recently, possibilities are being developed every day in the area of the digital humanities and through collaborative efforts with other academic and non-academic departments and

institutions. For instance, businesses, municipalities, and libraries have been exploring the potential of augmented reality to engage with the public in educational and interactive ways that rely on special collections and archive materials. The City of Philadelphia has developed web and mobile device applications for the general public that enhance sightseeing experiences by merging existing maps applications with historical photographs taken from their archives (Boyer 2011). As digital technologies continue to develop, it is safe to say that we will continue to discover and explore ways to reach new users and create new uses for special collections materials through digital surrogates and web technologies.

While librarians are increasingly optimistic about what lies ahead for special collections libraries, one issue that continues to be a common concern is, how the ubiquity of digital surrogates will affect the way scholars, students, and general users regard the physical materials once their surrogates are made widely available and easily accessible. Both Hirtle and Reagan suggest that, with the increase of digital surrogates, there could possibly be a decrease in the need to access physical print materials. Hirtle states, “there are going to be digital surrogates for more and more material, and more and more people will prefer to work with those surrogates;” while Reagan takes this statement a step further and suggests that, as use of physical holdings declines, it could become more difficult to justify current holdings and the acquisition of new (and often expensive) materials (Hirtle, 2002, p. 49; Reagan, 2009, n.p.). In more recent scholarship, Dale Correa addresses instances and examples of special collections libraries that, in an effort to preserve physical materials, are increasingly restricting access to physical books and manuscripts serious researchers, and instead referring researchers to surrogates on their online websites (Correa, 2016, p. 2). Central to these discussions is the concern that users will become accustomed to relying on surrogates to the extent that the digital will begin to take the place of physical objects. In her discussion of *Early English Books Online*, Diane Kichuk deals with this question of users conflation of digital surrogates with physical materials at length. Kichuk takes issue with the marketing strategies of the digital facsimile provider, noting

In a current online marketing brochure, ProQuest states that *EEBO* includes ‘cover-to-cover full-page images that show the works *exactly as they appeared in their original printed editions*’ (italics added) and that subscribing libraries can show users ‘what the original readers saw, back when the Wars of the Roses still raged’. Its promotional literature implies that *EEBO* contains clone-like copies of the original printed work. The student and scholar can therefore happily reside at home or their institution and conduct primary research, instead of traveling the world to libraries that still permit

access to the original. (Kichuk, 2007, p. 296)

The problem for Kichuk, is not the existence of digital surrogates, but the suggestion that digital surrogates are capable of completely circumventing the need to access rare materials in their physical form. Kichuk argues that, as students and scholars begin to rely more and more on digital surrogates, the surrogates no longer signify, or refer to, physical materials—but they come to be regarded as the genuine artifact in and of themselves. “The longer they look, the more the facsimile becomes the ‘real thing’. The scholar rationalizes the only version of the work she will ever examine—the ‘only thing’—as the ‘real thing’” (Kichuk, 2007, p. 296). An interesting parallel to Kichuk’s analysis might be found in Jean Baudrillard’s discussion of simulation and the simulacra. Baudrillard suggests that Western society exists in a world of simulations; that simulations have become so commonplace that they circumvent and supersede reality itself. Baudrillard states

It is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real, that is to say of an operation of deterring every real process via its operational double, a programmatic, metastable, perfectly descriptive machine that offers all the signs of the real and shortcircuits all its vicissitudes. (Baudrillard, 2006, p. 2)

Following Baudrillard, there is a distinct loss that occurs when the simulation comes to take the place of the “real,” because this process is not simply an act of replication or duplication, but through repeated deference to the simulation, the simulation itself takes the place of the real (in spite of the fact that it is an incomplete representation).

For special collections, the danger is that (if there is no distinction between digital and the “real”) a loss occurs in users’ understanding of the totality of that physical object. This loss has the potential to occur on two levels: (1) the loss of information that is not easily translated into digital images; and (2) the loss of context. As many scholars have noted there are many challenges to representing physical objects in digital form, as well as many aspects that cannot be, or frequently have not been, translated to digital surrogates. Abby Smith notes, in her article “Authenticity and Affect: When Is a Watch Not a Watch?,” “a book carries not only the text printed on the pages but also the explicit evidence of its use, such as marginalia and stains, and the cultural information implicit in its size, font, layout, and innumerable other physical traces that may or may not lend themselves to interpretation” (Smith, 2003, p. 173). She continues, “surrogates are notable for their inability to convey those crucial artifactual aspects and can deliver to the user only that which is fungible, that is, portable in any format. Anything that is intrinsic to the physical presence is lost” (Smith, 2003, p. 174). With digitization of rare books and special collections materials there is much knowledge that stands to be gained (through word-searchability, zoom

functions that allow for close analysis, increased accessibility, and the potential to compare materials at two different institutions simultaneously) but there is also a loss in that a digital copy can never completely reproduce the experience of handling the physical object. Diane Kichuk notes, “while digitization gives unprecedented access to content, that content is distorted by virtue of its production, and the print work it purports to represent with exactness, while seeming so tantalizingly accessible, is illusive” (Kichuk, 2007, p. 296).

More recently, Dale J. Correa, in her article “Digitization: Does It Always Improve Access to Rare Books and Special Collections?,” notes that “from the perspective of preservation, digitization is a blessing and a curse” (Correa, 2016, p.1). She argues, “A digital surrogate can provide the information conveyed in words or images, but it cannot capture the information contained in the physicality of special collections materials” (Correa, 2016, p.2). As Correa describes, there is a clear opportunity to reach wider audiences of users with digital surrogates, but there is also a loss in that the surrogate is by its very nature is incomplete and lacking in ability to communicate details about the physicality of an object. Diane Kichuk similarly argues that surrogates “preserve the text, but little of the book as a physical object” (Kichuk, 2007, p. 301). She suggests that surrogates “present ambivalent information about key physical characteristics, such as size, presence, typography, and context” (Kichuk, 2007, p. 301). While some of these issues can and will be worked out in time, the point still stands that digital surrogates are altogether different than physical materials and, while highly useful in some cases, they will never be able to replace a book or manuscript in its physical form. Further, when researchers, scholars, and students perceive or encounter a digital surrogate as though it were the original, without regard for the limitations of digital reproduction, there is a significant loss that occurs in their understanding of the material. Other potential problems with digitization include: the omission of important characteristics because items are not always reproduced in their entirety; blank pages that are frequently omitted; marginalia that is often cropped and omitted; binding evidence that can be omitted or ignored; distorted pages; and information about gatherings and sheet format that is often not included.

The second form of loss that occurs with the conflation of digital surrogates and physical materials is an issue of context. Abby Smith notes, “The context in which one views or uses an artifact can have significant bearing on how the item is experienced or perceived” (Smith, 2003, p. 177). When users utilize a digital surrogate, their encounter with that item is far different from how it might be experienced in physical form. For instance, passages from a rare book might be read within the context of an online search conducted, as opposed to being read within the context of adjacent passages in a particular work. While this type of research is highly beneficial under many circumstances, it is important that researchers are aware of this effect and that care is taken to consider the contexts in which the information originally appeared. Similarly, Prochaska explains that the extraction of content from its

original context and insertion into entirely new and different contexts has the potential to distort ones’ perception and understanding of that content. “It seems to me that facilitating the use of small snippets of a book out of its overall context does violence to the principle of scholarly argument” (Prochaska, 2009, p.22). Further, Stephen Davidson notes, “by digitizing the more ‘important’ or ‘significant’ items in a collection, we are giving those priority, which may have the unfortunate effect of drawing attention further away from documents of unrecognized importance in the collection” (Prochaska, 2009, p. 39). While the digitization of rare books and manuscripts is undoubtedly highly beneficial to special collections libraries, the concerns expressed in this brief survey of scholarship seem to suggest that there is a distinct danger in allowing researchers and users to conflate surrogates with the physical objects they represent.

For collectors and special collections librarians there is no question about the intrinsic value of rare materials in their physical form. The challenge lies in our ability to communicate those values to users, researchers, and administration and to promote the study of the physical characteristics of print materials. It is important for researchers to acknowledge that digital surrogates are in themselves an altogether separate utterance of a text; just as manuscripts are different from the printed text. Surrogates should be used to enhance research of the physical object, but scholars and researchers must be aware of the limitations in the ability of the digital to communicate attributes or characteristics of physical objects. For these reasons, it is essential that we continue to remain vigilant in our efforts to promote the study of our physical collections and the physical attributes of those materials that are not as easily translated into the digital realm. As Hirtle suggests, special collections should emphasize the unique (for example manuscripts) and “reinvigorate the idea of special collections as museums” (Hirtle, 2002, p. 49). Many librarians also suggest an increased emphasis on the artifactual value of our holdings; as digital surrogates deliver content and facilitate certain types of research, the study of books as physical objects is one that still necessitates handling works in their physical form. As digital surrogates are remediations of physical objects and thus an altogether different medium (with their own set of benefits and limitations) we should continue to explore new and innovative ways they might aid in new types of research. Digitization for research purposes is thus not limited to facsimiles; however, when digital facsimiles are created they should strive to capture as many physical characteristics as possible and not simply reproduce content. Finally, assessment of special collections libraries must continue to be adapted to account for the changing ways in which service is provided. Providing access to materials in a digital environment is still an act of service undertaken by the library. Our modes of assessment must be designed to take this into consideration; since we are nevertheless providing access to materials that have a concrete connection to physical materials. But we must also strive to maintain the physical connection between our library users and the physical materials as well.

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SELA/GENERAL NEWS:

SELA Member, Wanda Brown, has been elected President of the American Library Association. <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/brown-wins-2019-2020-ala-presidency/> Wanda is Director of the C.G. O'Kelly Library at Winston-Salem State University and serves as the SELA North Carolina state representative.

LIBRARY NEWS

Georgia

Kennesaw State University

On March 22 and 23, Kennesaw State University Graduate Library Team hosted over one hundred participants from universities all over the country for the Transforming Libraries Graduate Students Conference. This two-day national conference included formal presentations from visiting and KSU speakers, informal pop-up sessions, and plenty of time between sessions for networking and casual conversations. The original brainchild of librarian, Elisabeth Shields, the conference materialized with great success after over a year of planning and teamwork from the entire Graduate Library team.



Chapter contributors

Sharing the title of our conference, the book, *Transforming Libraries for Graduate Students* brought together the ideas of fifty contributors and organized into thirty-four chapter submissions. The Graduate Library's Crystal Renfro and Cheryl Stiles worked closely with ACRL for the publication.

North Carolina

NCSU Libraries

NCSU Libraries Wins Library of the Future Award *Workshop Series Recognized by ALA and Information Today*

The NCSU Libraries has received the 2018 American Library Association (ALA) Information Today / [Library of the Future Award](#) in recognition of its innovative “Emerging Digital Information Skills Workshops.”

Part of a larger expansion of offerings at the Libraries, the workshops address an unmet need for instruction around emerging technical skills including data science, visualization, virtual reality, digital media production, fabrication, and the research enterprise. Participants from over 80 campus units have attended the workshops thus far.

“This award is truly about teamwork, reflecting the amazing and innovative workshop programming being done by so many across the NCSU Libraries,” says Jennifer Garrett, the NCSU Libraries Head of Digital Research Education & Training. “By focusing on emerging digital information skills instruction, we have been able to reach thousands of students, faculty, and staff, spanning the colleges and departments of our campus community and confirming our place as NC State's competitive advantage.”

The workshops serve as an entry point for users to connect with library spaces, technologies, and services for ongoing utilization. To extend its reach beyond campus, the Libraries openly licenses a substantial portion of workshop materials and shares them with the wider library community for reuse and adaptation.

“We developed this programming with the goals of bolstering student success, supporting career readiness, and incubating creative pedagogy,” Garrett wrote in her workshop proposal.

Garrett created and submitted the award application with the Libraries’ Data & Visualization Librarian Alison Blaine, Libraries Fellow Hannah Rainey, and Interim Department Head of Research Engagement Mira Waller.

The Libraries will be honored at an awards ceremony during the ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans in June.

South Carolina

Greenville Public Library

Laptop Lending Kiosk One of Many Features at Greenville County Library System’s New Five Forks Branch

The Greenville County Library System’s new Five Forks Branch opened on the County’s densely populated southeast side and is the largest branch in the GCLS

system. At approximately 28,000 square feet, this branch is over twice the size of the ten other existing branches in the library system, offering many new features for patrons.

One of those is the first laptop lending kiosk in the Greenville system. The kiosk contains 12 laptop units for patron check-out while in the building. When the laptop is returned, the kiosk automatically recharges and installs software updates on each unit. The laptop lending kiosk was purchased with a generous gift from the Friends of the Greenville County Library System.

Other features of the new branch include:

- Quiet reading room
- Variety of public meeting spaces accommodating a range of activities from small group study to public programs for up to 200 attendees
- Large children’s area with centers for active learning and a secured outside “Play Porch”
- Separate teen area
- Two Drive-up windows: one for materials return with immediate check-in and optional receipt and one for pick-up of materials on hold.

PERSONNEL NEWS:

Alabama

Auburn University

Bonnie MacEwan, Dean of Libraries at Auburn University Libraries (AUL), has retired after 13 years at AUL and 36 years in the library profession. MacEwan was instrumental in the development and transformation of the Auburn libraries into a one-stop destination for users to research, study and get academic assistance across a wide variety of departments. She guided AUL through renovations of the Library of Architecture Design and Construction and, most recently, the challenging expansion of the university’s main library by 69,000 square feet over a 20-month period. MacEwan earned her BA from Whittier College in 1972 and her MALS from the University of Colorado in 1978 and prior to her arrival at Auburn, was assistant dean for collections at Penn State University for a decade before being promoted to the scholarly communication position designed to explore new technology-driven publishing ventures in collaboration with the Penn State University Press; art, archaeology and music librarian at the University of Missouri, Columbia; and Humanities Librarian at Central Missouri State University. MacEwan has served as a member of many boards and committees, including being a member of the Association of Research Libraries Board; elected to the Association of Southeast Research Libraries Board three times as President, member-at-large and secretary/treasurer; member of the Network of Alabama Academics Libraries Board and serving a term as president; chair of the Collection Management and Development Section of the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services Division of the American Library

Association. She served on several national editorial, library, and publishing advisory boards, including the boards for Wiley/Blackwell, Elsevier, ProQuest and EBSCO. She has served terms on the editorial committees of Library Acquisitions Practice and Theory, Library Resources, and Technical Services, Portico. MacEwan's publications focus on the development and academic use of electronic information in libraries.



Georgia

Kennesaw State University

Paula Adams is the new Director of the Reference and Instruction Unit at Kennesaw State University. Previously, she was the Head of User Services at Columbus State University in Georgia.



Jackie Watkins is in the newly created position, Electronic Resources Collection Development Librarian. She was a library assistant at Georgia State University. While working on her undergraduate degree at KSU, Jackie had been a library student assistant.



There were several retirements at KSU this spring. **Yongli Ma** was a librarian with Southern Polytechnic State University (SPSU) before the consolidation with KSU. In total, she has served 24 years in many capacities over the years including positions of Acquisitions Librarian, Associate Director for Technical Services, and Head of Access Services.



Retirees Rita Spisak, Yongli Ma, Elisabeth Shields

Elisabeth Shields has served as the Graduate Librarian for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences since 2011. Prior to coming to KSU, she worked at GA Tech's Enterprise Innovation Institute for 10 years. She is the driving force behind our national conference, Transforming Libraries for Graduate Students, a conference that attracts attendees from all the country.

Rita Spisak has thirty-three years of service with the KSU Libraries. She has worked in the Serials, Access Services, Reference, and Instruction units. Her positions ranged from library associate, librarian, and interim director of two departments.

North Carolina

UNC Greensboro

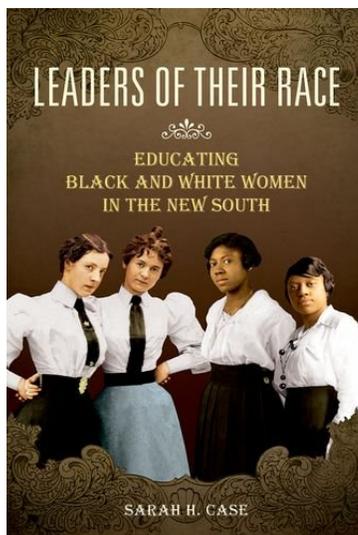
University Libraries has welcomed **Rachel Sanders** as the new First-Year Instruction and Social Sciences Librarian in Research, Outreach and Instruction. Sanders earned her bachelor of art's degree in History from UNC Greensboro and a master's degree in Library Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



Her primary responsibilities include working with Communication Studies' students and being the liaison to Social Work and Community/Therapeutic Recreation departments. Sanders' professional interests include information literacy instruction, researching library anxiety among students, educational technologies, first-year experiences and furthering professional networks among academic librarians.

BOOK REVIEWS

Leaders of Their Race: Educating Black and White Women in the New South. Sarah H. Case. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2017. ISBN 978-0-2520-8279-5 (pbk.). 238 p. \$28.00.



Post-civil war, two women's academies in Georgia opened their doors; one for whites only, the other catering to black women in the New South. Both schools sought to instill in their pupils decorum, feminine refinements and respectability, while at the same time preparing them to take on roles as leaders in their communities through intellectual and social engagement. In *Leaders of Their Race*, Sarah Case thoughtfully compares and contrasts the Lucy Cobb Institute of Athens, Georgia which aimed to create a new model of femininity for southern white women, with Spelman Seminary of Atlanta which educated black women to lead by example through modesty, moral character, and industriousness.

The author, a faculty member in the History Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara, provides a reflective comparison of these two schools during the years 1880 to 1925. As the roles of women transformed during the post-civil war era, each school believed that their graduates should represent the best of their race and the most effective way to prepare them was to create high expectations for their students. Requiring that their pupils be virtuous, modest and well educated, both schools hoped to make their graduates beyond reproach as they entered

society and served as models in their communities. The first two chapters of this four chapter study are devoted to the Lucy Cobb Institute (now defunct), its history, curriculum, and famous alumnae and the last two to Spelman Seminary, still in existence as a college.

The Lucy Cobb Institute, founded in 1859 by T.R.R. Cobb and named after his niece Lucy, sought to combine the attributes of traditional girls finishing schools - manners and feminine graces - with the necessity of preparing young women for participation in the public sphere, including employment. The founder's niece, Mildred Rutherford, instructor, principal and later president, was formative in developing the values and philosophy of the school: piety, propriety, and academic achievement. Anti-suffragist and later a leader of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, she was a prominent public speaker and author of her day, but continued to advocate for traditional roles for women. "Lucies" for the most part conformed to expectations at school, but taking cues from their independent administrators and faculty, many went on to further their education or have active careers. The Institute closed in 1931, primarily due to a drop in enrollment, lack of endowment and emerging competition from the University of Georgia.

Sophia Packard and Harriet Giles, two northern missionaries, founded Spelman Seminary in 1881 to address the education of freedwomen and their daughters. They believed in the value of industrial education in conjunction with academic studies as a means to instill self-discipline and promote the dignity of work. Besides basic chores, students learned home economics skills and eventually, the school was able to add professional programs: printing, nursing, missionary training and teaching. Wishing to become a true women's college like Vassar, the administrators expanded their academic course offerings in order to offer a genuine liberal arts education and the first two college degrees were awarded in 1901. The Seminary was fortunate to have substantial financial assistance from John D. Rockefeller, and this support, along with a proper endowment, allowed it to withstand the financial travails that affected similar schools.

Sarah Case provides a compelling examination of how these two women's schools, though founded on different visions and skewed by race and class, were remarkably similar in the values they espoused. Grooming their students to be well-educated, modest and respectable, they hoped to prepare their young graduates to contribute to a new society in the South and epitomize the highest womanly virtues. Extensively researched with notes, photographs, and a comprehensive bibliography, this volume in the series *Women, Gender and Sexuality in American History* is recommended for academic libraries, particularly those with education or women's studies programs.

Melanie J. Dunn
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Smoke Signals From Samarcand: The 1931 Reform School Fire and Its Aftermath. Barbara Bennett. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2018. ISBN 978-1-61117-860-9 (hardcover); 978-1-61117-631-6 (Ebook). 144 p. \$24.99

Barbara Bennett's research entices the reader to pursue this work as a story that needed to be told. We learn that smoke signals was a call for help. Was setting fire to buildings in this North Carolina juvenile training school for girls under the care of the State of North Carolina a crime punishable by life in prison or was it justified as a cry for help? In this small juvenile training center for girls in Eastern North Carolina, Bennett documents the actions of the residents who suffered chronic abuse and mistreatment at the hands of the staff and teachers.

From floggings, starvation, imprisonment in locked rooms and medical sterilization, the girls at Samarcand Manor experienced abuses beyond imagination today. Through Bennett's craft of writing and research, she tells a story that is captivating and painful to read. A place where evil overcame goals of rehabilitation led the unfortunate girls to attempt to escape the Manor. Their thinking in rebelling was that the escape might allow them to return to their homes. The fifteen girls meet a terrible end in the battle of wit and might that ensued.

Bennett reveals to us "In North Carolina in the 1930s, North Carolina was in the throes of a powerful eugenics movement. (Part One, One) At the time, influential members of society believed one must be strong, intelligent, economically and genetically superior if they are to bear and produce children." Bennett points to theories proposed by "Winston Churchill, Theodore Roosevelt, Margaret Sanger, H. G. Wells and H. L. Mencken, 'who once suggested that the U.S. government pay one thousand dollars each to all Americans deemed "undesirable if they would be voluntarily sterilized"' (Part One, One).

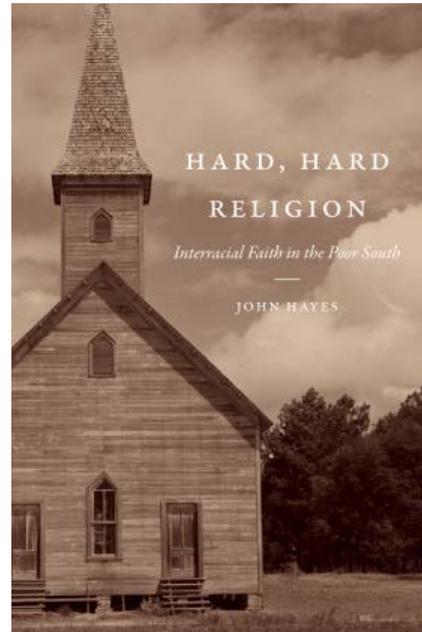
This research allows the reader to meet the fifteen accused girls residing at Samarcand Manor. Bennett's interviews reveal the prejudice, bias, power and evil resident in the minds of the public and government authorities promoting "natural selection". As a case study, it reveals how the science of eugenics could be visited upon the powerless and weakest of society. How did the state of North Carolina employ staff who lied to a girl that she needed an appendectomy so that a sterilization might be performed? Read the stories and remember the power we gain from the knowledge of the uses of history. Never again, we say.

This question and more are examined by Bennett's research and can lead anyone to a deeper understanding of our past as a society and those who became our victims. A great read and a helpful awakening to women's issues and to our past in North Carolina.

Recommended for public libraries, school libraries, academic libraries and women's studies classes.

Carol Walker Jordan
Retired Writer and Educational Consultant

Hard, Hard Religion: Interracial Faith in the Poor South. John Hayes. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017. ISBN 978-1-4696-3532-3 (pbk. - \$27.95); 978-1-4696-3531-6 (hardcover - \$90.00); 978-1-4696-3533-0 (Ebook - \$19.99). 250 p.



Beginning with a serious determination to skim Hayes' 238 page book and get a review ready for the SELn spring issue, I soon changed my approach. Each and every page revealed another fascinating anecdote along the trail Hayes was leading me, it became impossible to simply skim his words.

Hayes' ability to show how disenfranchised black and white people living in poverty and discrimination in the South in the years before World War II and the Civil Rights movement shared commonalities and developed a folk religion to sustain themselves. Christianity in its appeal to those who had risen above the levels of poverty and begun to climb into the middle class was not appealing to black and white people trapped in poverty and held down by prejudice and no opportunity to move beyond their circumstances.

The last paragraph of John Hayes' book, gives us a look at "one of folk Christianity's practitioners—a farm laborer who coined the evocative phrase "hard, hard religion". The laborer said, "the snake came, and Adam and Eve couldn't stay away from the snake, it got to them, that's what happened, it just got to them. Every day there's a snake in our lives, every day, I tell you...There's nothing so bad on the outside, that it don't have its equal on the inside...I'm

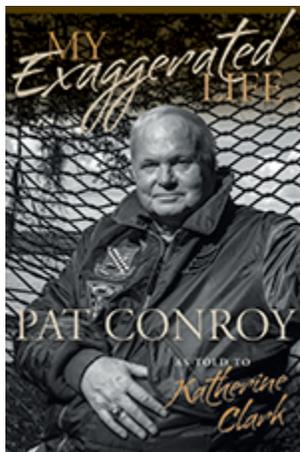
just a bad soul, trying to get as good as possible, before I'm called". (p. 196)

John Hayes is an excellent story teller and a painter of deep feelings and emotions through his words and phrases. For a look into the various ways folk Christianity adapted the rituals and practices of traditional Christian faith, Hayes' research reveals distinct adaptations in music, preaching, funerals, burials and graveyards.

A conclusion chapter, notes, bibliography and index provide a student or faculty member with excellent resources to investigate. There are black and white illustrations to illuminate the narrative. Recommended for public libraries, academic libraries and church and seminary libraries.

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My Exaggerated Life. Pat Conroy as told to Katherine Clark. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2018. ISBN 978-1-161117-907-1 (hardcover - \$29.99); 978-1-61117-908-8 (Ebook - \$19.99). 352 p.



My Exaggerated Life is the product of a special collaboration between the great American author, Pat Conroy, and oral biographer Katherine Clark, who recorded hundreds of hours of conversations with Conroy before he passed away in 2016. No subject was off limits including aspects of his tumultuous life he had never revealed." (Suzanne Axland, Marketing Director, USC Press) This revelation by Ms. Axland piqued my curiosity and I realized I was to experience the work of an oral biographer, possibly my first venture into an oral biographer's world

where conversation gave revelations unexperienced in other types of biographies.

Certainly I did not expect the revelations that an oral biography could produce until I opened the book and on page 1, I was confronted with the realism of Conroy's words, "I had the greatest childhood on earth, because Santini beat the shit out of me, then the Citadel beat the shit out of me. So I was ready for life. The Great Santini taught me everything I needed to know about how the world would treat me. He taught me everything life could hurt me with, crush me with, throw at me; there were no surprises that life got to throw at me because I'd grown up with the Great Santini." (p. 1). Conroy confides further to Clark, "and if that wasn't enough I was sent to the Citadel, where I got my nose rubbed in shit for four straight years". (p.1). Clark revealed that Conroy was a person who liked to talk about himself. He was someone who would call a friend and talk for one to two hours and had no trouble keeping the conversation going. For her, his style of revealing his thoughts, past experiences and his love of story telling, provided "over 200 hours of conversations which she recorded to provide this oral biography".

Clark organized her interviews and Conroy's conversations into significant places where Conroy lived and worked (intertwining significant life events and people who were critical to his life story) : Beaufort, SC, (1967-1973), Atlanta (1973-1981), Rome (1981-1988) , San Francisco (1988-1992), Fripp Island, and Beaufort, SC, (1992-2016), where he died in 2016.

To encourage readers of this oral biography, I can promise one will have an unforgettable experience reading and feeling Conroy's words. My second paragraph in which I reveal his words: "I had the greatest childhood on earth..." (p.1) sets the tone for the following 313 pages. Expect to find that Bronwen Dickey's words are perfect to describe Pat Conroy, as "big-hearted, wickedly funny, and completely unforgettable, even when his demons threatened to get the better of him. No one was more generous toward other writers, or more encouraging to those who sought his counsel. No one better understood the power of stories to save lives. A great light went out on March 4, 2016 but Katherine Clark has done the world a profound service by rekindling it in these pages." (Bronwen Dickey press reviewer)

Recommended for public, academic and liberal studies libraries. 2018

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