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## Home Without Walls: Southern Baptist Women and Social Reform in the Progressive Era

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the lower Mississippi Valley. During the antebellum years, Bolton relied heavily on advertisements, court records, and newspaper accounts to document how enslaved people became runaways escaping torture, health issues, horrible living conditions, and murder. Vivid accounts are given of runaways being beaten, attacked by massive dogs, hanged, raped, and treated inhumanely by owners and others who may have lived within the boundaries of where the runaways were captured.

Excellent research is provided in a group of tables, such as Table 1: Lower Mississippi Valley Runaway Slave Database of 1396 individuals between 1831-1860, Table 2: Runaways by Owners and Advertisers, Table 3: Out of State Destinations, reported by Owners and Jailers, Table 5: Age of Runaway Slaves, and etc. (p. 134-235).

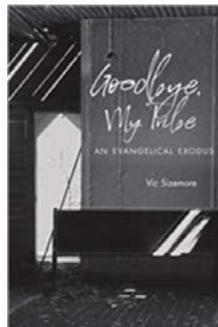
S. Charles Bolton offers a fascinating review of travels and writings by Frederick Law Olmsted in the mid-1850s. Olmsted wrote letters to describe his observations and interviews with slave owners and runaway slaves. These were published in the *Times* in 1852 and 1853 in a series titled "The South" (p. 17).

This book is recommended for public libraries, academic libraries, theological libraries, and archival societies. See Postscript, p. 229, Appendix, p. 233, Notes, p. 237, Bibliography, p. 265, and Index, p. 283.

Carol Walker Jordan, Ph.D., MLIS

### ***Goodbye, My Tribe: An Evangelical Exodus***

Vic Sizemore  
Tuscaloosa: University of  
Alabama Press, 2020  
ISBN: 9780817320577  
184 p. \$29.95 (Hbk)



When I was twelve, I walked down the center aisle of the First Baptist Church in Kings Mountain, North Carolina, and confessed my sins to Jesus. I asked to be accepted into the church family. At the time I spent hours each week in church activities— morning Sunday School, Sunday Evening Training School, Wednesday night Youth Dinners, and Thursday night Choir Practice. Throughout the year I went on hay rides provided by my Sunday School teachers, hot dog roasts at Lake Crawford and the Kings Mountain

National Park, sewing classes with ladies of the church, summers in Bible School, and week long camping adventures at the Baptist Conference Center in Ridgecrest, North Carolina. From age 12 to age 17, I maintained this strong affiliation to the faith and life of a small town Baptist community of believers. However, as I grew and became an intense reader and lover of the Kings Mountain Public Library, my dedication to the Baptist faith weakened and I wandered beyond the personal and social lives I lived before.

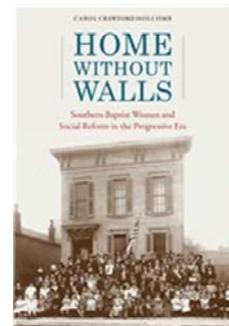
Vic Sizemore's writing about his exodus from the evangelical faith revealed some of the same awakenings I experienced. If anyone has experienced life in a small southern town as I, Vic Sizemore's *Goodbye, My Tribe* is an all-consuming narrative. Broken into life chapters and colored with his passionate tales of life in an evangelical setting, Vic Sizemore will keep you under the spell of his life. This may help you to understand by relating to him why he says "Goodbye, My Tribe."

Recommended for public, academic, theological, and seminary libraries. See his Conclusion on pages 153-158, and Works Cited, pages 158-167.

Carol Walker Jordan, Ph.D., MLIS

### ***Home Without Walls: Southern Baptist Women and Social Reform in the Progressive Era***

Carol Crawford Holcomb  
Tuscaloosa: University of  
Alabama Press, 2020  
ISBN: 9780817320546  
264 p. \$49.95 (Hbk)



"The Progressive Era was a period of widespread social activism and political reform across the United States that spanned the 1890s to the 1920s. The main objectives of the Progressive movement were addressing problems caused by industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and political corruption" (Cover).

The Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), founded in 1888, became a voice for Southern Baptist women who were formulating the "social gospel." Made up of the social elite of Baptist women (in response to the activities of the Methodist and Presbyterian women's groups), these activist Baptist women moved to form an initiative --the emerging "social gospel" movement.

Carol Holcomb presents interesting documentation on how the WMU was able to shift

women's activities from inside their homes to outside and into the public section. She explains how allowing women to care and impact neighborhoods and organizations allowed them to move beyond the walls of the home and the meeting spaces to which they were previously confined.

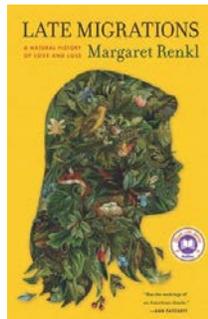
Holcomb explains there was a significant success of the work of the WMU when they built the establishment of the social work initiative. It involved years spent building and supporting the idea of social workers to carry out the initiatives of community building and community development in small and large communities across the nation.

A great historical resource for libraries with many good photographs, highlighting the women who dedicated time and effort to building the WMU. Recommended for academic, public, and archival libraries.

Carol Walker Jordan, Ph.D., MLIS

### ***Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss***

Margaret Renkl  
Minneapolis: Milkweed  
Editions, 2019  
ISBN: 9781571313782  
248 p. \$24.00 (Hbk)



After sheltering in place for a few months during the spring of 2020, articles about the rediscovered importance of family and the wonders of nature that are right in front of us, or at least in our yards, appeared. These themes are at the center of Margaret Renkl's lovely and prescient book, *Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss*. The chapters alternate, more or less, between 112 brief essays about five generations of Renkl's family and her observations about the nature that resides just beyond her back door. The book is neither a formal family history nor a nature guide. Instead, it is a meditation about life and the loss that occurs as the seasons come and go.

The family history Renkl recounts begins with the birth of her mother in 1931, in the land of peanuts, wiregrass, and red dirt roads known as Lower Alabama. She relays family stories passed down and she includes brief vignettes from her own story. Renkl describes tender moments with

family members, the heartache of her mother's depression, the moment she realized she could read a children's book by herself, and the time her grandmother was shot in the chest. Renkl's essays work forward toward the present. Yet some events from the past, such as the grief that resides in the wake of a loved one's death, linger and sometimes find temporary lodging in the here and now.

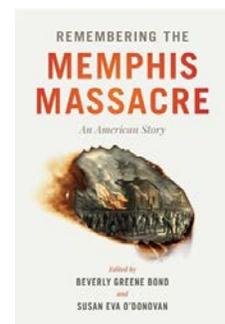
Renkl states that she must continually relearn that there is "splendor in decay" (p. 212). However, the sorrow that accompanies loss requires no instruction—and neither does the joy that life brings. Her delight in the natural world radiates throughout this book. She finds so much pleasure watching the simple creatures, plants, and trees in her suburban backyard. Although Renkl claims not to be a scientist, her writings about flora and fauna harken to that of Aldo Leopold or Annie Dillard. When once asked if she is a trained naturalist, Renkl replied humbly that she is "more of a trained Googler" (p. 73). Renkl is far too modest. She is an op-ed columnist for the *New York Times* and writes about the flora, fauna, and culture of the South. Renkl's keen powers of observation are especially noteworthy because her vision is failing.

Margaret Renkl grew up in Birmingham, Alabama, and she now resides in Nashville, Tennessee, but it was the trips to see her grandparents that imprinted the piney woods on her. Family and place reside in her quiet moments. Her mother comes to her in her dreams and the blue jay's song takes her home again. Recommended for public and academic libraries.

Kristine Stilwell, University of North Georgia

### ***Remembering the Memphis Massacre: An American Story***

Beverly Greene Bond and  
Susan Eva O'Donovan  
Athens: University of Georgia  
Press, 2020  
ISBN: 9780820356501  
232 p. \$99.95 (Hbk)



As with many books published today by our university presses, a title is critical to call attention to an author's passion for years of painstaking research and dedication to the seeking