Winter 2-1-2021

Clothing and Fashion in Southern History

Melanie Dunn

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/seln>

Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Dunn, Melanie (2021) "Clothing and Fashion in Southern History," *The Southeastern Librarian*: Vol. 68 : Iss. 4 , Article 9.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/seln/vol68/iss4/9>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Southeastern Librarian by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu.

Christian Citizens: Reading the Bible in Black and White in the Postemancipation South

Elizabeth L. Jemison
Chapel Hill: The University of
North Carolina Press, 2020
ISBN: 9781469659695
242p. \$29.95 (Pkb)

As Elizabeth L. Jemison's research and writing explains, following Reconstruction and the passing of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, evangelical black leaders formed churches and assembled congregations of black men and women throughout southern states in the postemancipation period. These leaders focused upon providing Christian training and support to newly freed citizens. Encouraged by their reliance upon identities as Christians and as fully endowed citizens, the strength to secure their rights within their newly formed territories and states seemed justified and reasonable. Yet, as Jemison points out, acceptance and inclusion did not meet successfully as the Evangelicals had hoped.

Whether the white citizens, both men and women, were fully open and welcoming to the new citizens or not, there was to be a hard fought battle over many years and on many different levels as the postemancipation years moved forward. White men were slow and skeptical to accept black men in public office, in leadership in clubs and organizations, in sports and leisure, or in evangelical settings. Women advocated for paternalistic attitudes and behaviors toward black women across religious, social and educational activities. Jemison justifies her arguments with excellent research into the development of a religious culture that differed greatly from the hopes that were presented by the original evangelical leaders of the Christianity movement in the postemancipation years.

Jemison's studies focus mainly in an area of the lower Mississippi River Valley. The Chapters of her research focus upon the years of 1863-1900 and are organized under topics: Emancipation, Reconstruction, Redemption, Paternalism Reborn, Segregation, and a Conclusion: Family Values and Racial Order.

Recommended for academic and theological libraries, historical societies and public libraries. There is a Notes section on page 175, a Bibliography on page 203 and an Index on page 221. There are no internal Illustrations, however, the cover illustrations are original photographs of some incidents mentioned in the research.

Carol Walker Jordan, Ph.D., MLIS

Clothing and Fashion in Southern History

Ted Ownby and
Becca Walton, eds.
Jackson: University Press of
Mississippi, 2020
ISBN: 9781496829511
174 p. \$30.00 (Pbk)

Contributions by Grace Elizabeth Hale, Katie Knowles, Ted Ownby, Jonathan Prude, William Sturkey, Susannah Walker, Becca Walton, and Sarah Jones Weicksel.

Clothing and Fashion in Southern History's essays explore aspects of fashion and garment-making in the Southern states far removed from the historical attention typically paid to the antebellum fashion of Southern plantation owners. In 2016, Ted Ownby and Becca Walton organized a symposium at the University of Mississippi on Southern fashion and cloth production, later compiling and editing select contributor's essays on various aspects of the subject. Identifying an area of study which, up until recently, has not received the warranted level of academic research, this collection of original essays helps to fill in background and context for the importance of cloth and fashion in Southern culture and identity.

The first two essays by Katie Knowles and Sarah Jones Weicksel, respectively, cover the latter half of the nineteenth century. While Knowles explores the importance of enslaved people and their garments in impacting the textile industry, as well as their cultural imprint through cloth consumption and creating their own modes of dress, Weicksel's essay examines the roles women played in sewing confederate soldier's clothing and the subsequent elevation or demotion of those roles and their status in society by the changing governments.

In the 1930's, the Works Projects Administration sought to include unemployed women in work relief programs. Susannah Walker's analysis notes the WPA provided sewing rooms as a gender approved option, limiting women from obtaining needed industrial skills for higher paying jobs in the garment industry. Becca Walton, co-editor and contributor, relates how the incarcerated at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman used sewing skills and creativity to assert their humanity. In *The Mississippi Poor People's Corporation*, William Sturkey describes how clothing production by poor black Mississippians provided for their economic advancement and represented true Black Power in the late sixties and seventies.

"The Dress Makes the Band," the final essay in the collection, profiles the rise of a bohemian culture in Athens, Georgia which visually represented itself through thrift store and secondhand clothing. Elizabeth Hale, contributor and author of the book *Cool Town: How Athens, Georgia, Launched Alternative Music and Changed American Culture*, describes how, in the nineteen seventies and early eighties, mostly middle class students and local nonconformists created a lifestyle and sub-society based on alternative values and expressed it through their music, art, and vintage, thrift store clothes.

Introducing and exploring the themes featured in this series of scholarly essays, Ted Ownby and Jonathan Prude lead the reader to an understanding of common threads that tie these studies together. A list of contributors, along with select illustrations and extensive notes and index, make this a recommended volume for academic libraries with historical and sociological collections on the Southeastern United States.

Melanie Dunn, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Horace Kephart Writings

George Frizzell and
Mae Miller Claxton, eds.
Knoxville: The University of
Tennessee Press, 2020
ISBN: 9781621905417
707 p. \$45.00 (Pbk)

Rarely do I examine a book by putting it on our postal scale to determine the weight. At close to 2.5 pounds, I thought a reader might want to know what was included that make a volume weigh so much. The Table of Contents shows us that the editors were enthusiastic about sharing Kephart's written words. The volume, containing 707 pages divided into 10 Chapters and supported by 3 Appendices, Notes, a Selected Bibliography and an Index, should make any student of Appalachian studies think this collection is a gold mine. The joy of the collection to me was to see a literary giant unfold through the authenticity of Horace Kephart's documented expressions.

George Frizzell and Mae Miller Claxton organized the many writings included in the Kephart collection into ten chapters: Biography, Family and Friends, Camping and Woodcraft, Guns, Southern Appalachian Culture, Fiction, The Cherokees, Scouting, and Park and Trail. Each chapter is filled with Kephart's rich and engaging written prose. Living the life that he writes about and embracing the Appalachian landscape, Kephart's writings show his passion for the beauty of nature and nature's challenges of a life lived in the out of doors.

Highly recommended for all public libraries, academic libraries, and national park library collections. Illustrations throughout the pages are black and white and help to gain insight into the writings.

Carol Walker Jordan, Ph.D., MLIS

Never Justice, Never Peace: Mother Jones and the Miner Rebellion at Paint and Cabin Creeks

Lon Kelly Savage and
Ginny Savage Ayers
Morgantown: West Virginia
University Press, 2018
ISBN: 9781946684370
360 p. \$27.99 (Pbk)

In 24 short chapters, Lon Kelly Savage and Ginny Savage Ayers present a dramatic account of the coal miners' strike and the resulting violent crack-down by mine operators in the Paint and Cabin Creeks region of West Virginia that took place in