

Summer 7-1-2021

## Sharks in the Shallows: Attacks on the Carolina Coast

Carol Walker Jordan

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### Recommended Citation

Jordan, Carol Walker (2021) "Sharks in the Shallows: Attacks on the Carolina Coast," *The Southeastern Librarian*: Vol. 69 : Iss. 2 , Article 10.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/seln/vol69/iss2/10>

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The fundamental purpose of this study is to answer the question, “Why did the once ubiquitous act of soliciting rides from a passing vehicle lose acceptance?” (p. 2). Reid refutes the common assumptions that there was no longer a need or that the practice became too hazardous by establishing that ride solicitation was still popular during the 1960s and early 1970s with prevalent auto-mobility and that acts of violence committed throughout this period of examination prove that “thumb tripping” always bore a risk for hitchhiker and motorist alike. Above all other considerations, he convincingly demonstrates that the public’s perceptions about personal safety, risk aversion, and individualism eventually prevailed while social trust and cooperation (which had made this widespread practice possible) disintegrated during the 1980s and has never recovered. Even with the recent emergence of ride-sharing companies like Uber and Lyft, the author astutely notes that these monetized services are fundamentally different from the randomness of traditional hitchhiking because they provide passengers with user scores and reviews of their drivers to cater to modern Americans’ concerns about personal safety.

Arguably the greatest attribute of this book is its sheer diversity. Reid’s scope is not limited to the experiences of people from one or two backgrounds but attempts to capture as many walks of life as possible. From beginning to end, he painstakingly illustrates how various demographics (age, race, gender, social class, and sexuality) uniquely shaped every hitchhiker’s experience. High schoolers, Native Americans, and gay men are among the varied cast of actors featured throughout this inclusive history. Furthermore, every region is represented, including the southeastern United States. Of particular interest to this readership are the challenges that African American hitchhikers faced in the Jim Crow South. Considering the author’s laborious efforts to reconstruct this comprehensive history, he can take pride in knowing that *Roadside Americans* is aptly titled.

No less impressive is the breadth and depth of research that went into the book. The extensive list of newspapers in the bibliography alone is staggering. It is apparent that Reid reviewed every relevant source he could find to write this monograph. There is, however, one critique.

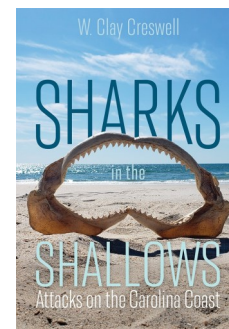
Researchers interested in consulting the source(s) that informed his discussion of the 1968 presidential election and the resulting realignment of American politics (pp. 151-152 and endnote #69) will find that they are not provided in the endnote, which is undoubtedly a simple oversight in an otherwise judiciously cited work.

This minor criticism by no means discredits the overall quality of this scholarly tour de force. Despite the numerous layers of this complex history, Reid adroitly navigates them all in a lucid and organized manner. Scholars and general readers interested in learning about the bygone era of hitchhiking in the United States or reexamining major themes of 20th century American history through this fresh perspective will find *Roadside Americans: The Rise and Fall of Hitchhiking in a Changing Nation* an illuminating and innovative addition to the body of social history literature.

A. Blake Denton, The University of Arkansas at Monticello

### ***Sharks in the Shallows: Attacks on the Carolina Coast***

W. Clay Creswell  
Columbia: University of  
South Carolina Press, 2021  
ISBN: 9781643361802  
184 p. \$19.99 (Pbk)



Most North Carolina families have a history of visiting the beaches along the North and South Carolina coasts. Some own homes there and others rent houses for parts of the summer to gather for a traditional or annual beach trip. Among the sea creatures that are well known to most family members are the jellyfish, the sea gulls, the dolphins and the sharks. A son in our family expressed his opinion of the sharks by saying, “The sharks stay in the water and I stay on the beach!”

Fear of sharks is well founded as W. Clay Creswell tells us in *Sharks in the Shallows Attacks on the Carolina Coast*. “Oceans are home to some five hundred species, and of those, fifty-six are known to reside in or pass through the waters off the coast of both North and South Carolina...at any time waders, swimmers, and surfers enjoying

these waters may be within just one hundred feet of a shark.” However, he goes on to assure us through his research that “attacks on humans are extremely rare” (cover).

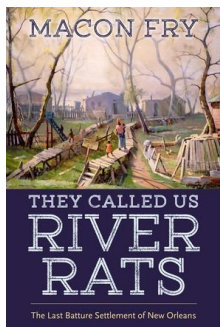
Add to the assurance that shark attacks on humans are rare, Creswell gives evidence that sharks “keep our oceans clean” and “bring balance to our oceans.” His chapters hold tremendous advice and factual assistance to help us understand these ocean creatures. He says “all sharks, regardless of size should be admired, appreciated and respected for their beauty, for their survivability, for the important role that they play in the world” (p.3).

Chapters cover particular research related to shark attacks, causes of death in coastal waters of the Carolinas, and specific Carolina shark attacks from 1817-2019.

Recommended for public libraries, marine libraries, and science collections.

Carol Walker Jordan, Ph.D., MLIS

### ***They Called Us River Rats: The Last Batture Settlement of New Orleans***



Macon Fry  
Jackson: University Press of  
Mississippi, 2021  
ISBN: 9781496833075  
232 p. \$25.00 (Hbk)

There has always been an allure to living on water in a sailboat, a yacht, a ship, a homemade raft, or a pleasure cruiser. The

adventures of living on water is real to Macon Fry as he shares his fascinating experiences living on the Batture Settlement of New Orleans in *They Called Us River Rats: The Last Batture Settlement of New Orleans*.

Fry’s boyhood summers of the ‘60s were spent in a cabin on the Rappahannock, a tidal stream off the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia. Fry says, “the Rappahannock taught me that rivers are places where days are long and punctuated by the rhythm of waves and storms...Riverbanks and mud flats were places to find and catch things and sometimes eat them...” (p.xii). His fascination with the outdoors and rivers grew into a love he

held within himself.

Fry explains when he chose to look for a place to begin his life after college he discovered the Batture settlement of New Orleans. A thin line of land between the Mississippi River and New Orleans was home to “river rats” that Fry joined and became immersed in the ways of those people who braved the elements of the water and the weather to make a life.

Fry’s writings and story-telling are fascinating reading. There are many photographs of the houses on stilts, other “river rats” and their families, camp housing of varied structures, drawings of the Camps (assigned spaces for dwellings) along the Batture and facing the Mississippi. Fry draws upon his years of writing, to compile the stories of his experiences as well as his interviews with dwellers in the Batture—fortune tellers, faith healers, and wild bird trappers. *They Called Us River Rats* is delightful reading and recommended for school, academic, public, and science libraries.

Carol Walker Jordan, Ph.D., MLIS

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