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Carolina Israelite: How Harry Golden Made Us Care about Jews, the South, and Civil Rights

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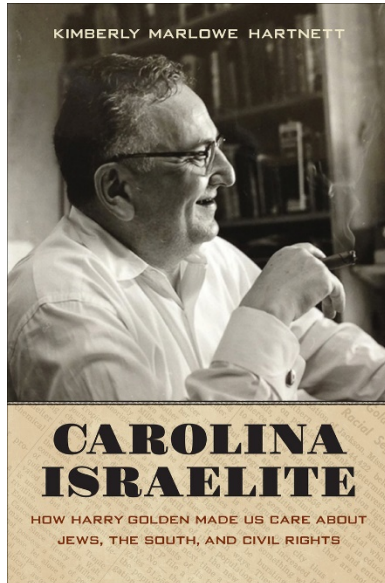
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Carolina Israelite: How Harry Golden Made Us Care About Jews, the South and Civil Rights. Kimberly Marlowe Hartnett. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. ISBN 978-1-4696-2103-6. 368 p. \$35.



The idea to request to review Kimberly Marlowe Hartnett's "Carolina Israelite: How Harry Golden Made Us Care about Jews, the South and Civil Rights" was inspired by my life experiences living in Charlotte. Driving through a neighborhood where Harry Golden lived and worked, I regularly traveled Hawthorne Lane and Seventh Street. There is an historical marker: "Harry Golden 1902 – 1981 "Journalist, humorist & civil rights advocate. He published 1944-68, *The Carolina Israelite*. He lived one block N.E." (Charlotte Observer Archives). To learn more about Harry Golden and his life seemed a great opportunity.

Kimberly Marlowe Hartnett says of Golden, "middle-aged, raspy-voiced cigar-smoking, bourbon-loving Jewish raconteur from New York's Lower East Side (who) landed in Charlotte, North Carolina, on the eve of the civil rights movement". (p.1). Of his impact on the Charlotte community, she said, "three decades roasting the painful realities of segregation in the warmth of his wit, first in his ...one-man newspaper, *Carolina Israelite*, and then in more than twenty books" (p.1).

Wanting to know more about Golden, I joyfully opened the book when it arrived. I immediately jumped to the black and white photographs of Golden's family, his home and office, his visits with celebrity friends and awards evenings, along with a front page illustration of the *Carolina Israelite*, dated 1961. (p. 145-156). Hartnett's weaving of the story of Golden's life is a colorful collection of insights that keeps a reader wanting to know more.

To gather a deeper perspective on Golden, the writer, I went in search of "Only in America" (The World Publishing Company, 1958) (usually available in most libraries). This book is a collection of the interviews and essays Golden created whenever he met, talked with or experienced an event or happening that impressed him.

Carl Sandburg wrote on the cover leaf of "*Only in America*": "whatever is human interests Harry Golden. Honest men, crooks, knuckleheads, particularly anybody out of the ordinary if even a half-wit, any of them is in his line. Golden writes about them. He drops the sheets of writing in a barrel. Comes the time of the month to get out his paper, *The Carolina Israelite*, he digs down into the barrel and finds copy". Cracker Barrel philosopher was mentioned in a New York Times article "If there is such a thing as a cracker barrel philosopher left in our Century, Mr. Golden has earned the title". (Hartnett, p. 144)

Recommend for all libraries and all readers.

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