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Florida Humanities Council.

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30 years of exploring the Florida experience

James Audubon: A Florida Portfolio

Writers bring history of segregation to life

FLORIDA HUMANITIES COUNCIL
OUR 30TH ANNIVERSARY OFFERS US A VANTAGE POINT from which to acknowledge our past and envision our future. Like the Roman god Janus, we pause to look at what is behind us and what lies ahead.

In this issue of FORUM we want to tell our own story by highlighting some of the contributions the Florida Humanities Council (FHC) has made to the cultural and civic life of Florida over the past three decades. If “history is a biography of a nation,” as Shelby Foote proclaims, then we would say that the humanities are the biography of our state.

FHC has awarded a major portion of its grant money to projects that document and illuminate the Florida experience, more than $30 million for thousands of educational programs in communities throughout the state. Our Speakers Bureau and Florida Center for Teachers have compounded the impact, offering hundreds of people opportunities to learn about the heritage of our complex and diverse state, and to share what they learn with others.

FORUM has been a major vehicle for this important educational role, which is why, in this issue, we feature excerpts of articles from the FORUM archives. Written by some of our best scholars and writers, the articles represent the 10-year commitment FORUM has made to publishing in-depth information about Florida’s cultural, social, and natural environment.

Of course we could not have done any of this without a combination of funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the state, and, increasingly, from the generous donations of individuals, foundations, and corporations. We thank these funders, along with the hundreds of civic, cultural, and educational institutions across the state that are our partners. Your commitment to enriching our shared civic and intellectual lives exhibits the spirit of inquiry and adventure that keeps the humanities alive.

So what about the future? This year we’ll have our first “Humanities Awards” banquet in October, in conjunction with a Florida Studies Conference; and this fall we will launch a nine-city Chautauqua tour featuring some great figures from Florida and American history. We will continue to offer seminars for K-12 teachers and to provide a mix of radio, print, and live programming that extends the reach of our efforts into small towns and rural communities. We will host “Gatherings” in some of these places because we think heritage tourism is good for our state’s economic and cultural life. And we are contemplating launching an endowment to secure the future. We look forward to many more years of working with you to serve our state and to ensure that the rigor and vitality of our intellectual life is linked with its economic development and future prosperity.

With this 30th anniversary issue we unveil our new logo and tag line, a first step in modernizing our look to more accurately reflect today’s Florida Humanities Council. With more than 300 exciting programs to participate in each year, we’ve become a more dynamic organization for our members. The concentric circles emanating from the dot of the second letter “j” symbolize both the individual and interactive natures of the humanities experience.

It’s like tossing a stone in the pond of ideas. This simple action has a fascinating ripple effect, radiating out in ever larger circles to generate new ideas and new energy—the circle of life. So dive in! Join your fellow thinkers, leaders and doers as we dive into the ongoing saga of Florida’s living history, heritage and culture in ways that let you touch it, feel it, and experience it for yourself.

Letter
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Explore Mount Dora and the Everglades with FHC

Explore the history, people, heritage, and environment of Florida. Join us this spring as we visit Mount Dora and the Everglades. Mount Dora, known as "Florida's most beautiful small town," will be our destination March 21-23. We'll stay in the historic Lakeside Inn on the shores of Lake Dora. With local historians and preservationists as our guides, we will learn about efforts to return more than 6,000 acres of agricultural lands to wetlands; and we'll hear about the history and architecture of the Golden Triangle region of Eustis, Tavares, and Mount Dora.

We'll be in the Everglades March 28-30, where Miccosukee Elder William Buffalo Tiger will take us by airboat to his ancestral land. We'll boat among the mangrove islands, cypress domes, and pine islands with biologists, historians, and writers. For more information contact Laurie Berlin at 727-553-3810 or email lberlin@flahum.org.

30th Anniversary Chautauqua Tour Slated for Fall 2003

Nine towns will host FHC's 30th Anniversary Chautauqua Tour next fall. Preliminary plans call for some of Florida's finest Chautauqua scholars/actors to perform over a three-day period in each town. The performers include J. D. Sutton as Thomas Jefferson, Betty Jean Steinshouer as Harriet Beecher Stowe and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, LeRoy Mitchell, Jr. as James Weldon Johnson, Joan Wolfberg as Eleanor Roosevelt, and Phyllis McEwen as Zora Neale Hurston.

Each day they will make appearances in the community, leading discussions of their characters' works, reading poetry, conducting workshops, and participating in other activities. Each night they will perform as their characters. To learn more about the 30th Anniversary Chautauqua Tour, visit our web site at www.flahum.org or call 727-553-3808. Although the final schedule won't be available until August, here is the preliminary schedule: Sept. 18-21, De Funiak Springs and Panama City; Oct. 15-18, Deland and Mount Dora; Oct. 23-26, Dunedin and New Port Richey; Nov. 12-15, Lake Wales and Plant City.

2003 FCT Summer Program To Include "We the People"

The Florida Center for Teachers will host six week-long seminars this summer, including "We the People," a new NEH initiative designed to foster the teaching of American history in our schools. The summer program also includes seminars on Searching for a Sense of Place in Florida, Archaeology and Community, Asian Religions in Florida, African America Literary Traditions, Finding a Common Path, and Myth and Ritual.

This FCT summer professional development program is free and open to all full-time Florida teachers, grades K-12, through a competitive application process. All seminars qualify for in-service credit and are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards. Teachers may apply on-line at www.flahum.org or receive an application in the mail by calling 727-553-3808.
Florida Center for Teachers Investigates "Florida Noir"

The Florida Center for Teachers invites alumni for a weekend of "Florida Noir" on April 24-27. Join us in DeLand as we examine this popular literary genre. Dr. Ellen Smith, professor of English at Stetson University, will lead the examination of this mysterious dark side of the Sunshine State; and scholars and authors will discuss how Florida has become the epicenter of crime fiction. All FCT alumni are eligible to attend. For cost and registration information, call 727-553-3803 or email jhm@flahum.org.

FHC Grant Deadlines

FHC grants provide nonprofit organizations with the opportunity to design and produce their own public humanities programs for their communities. Speaker series, photo exhibits, film series, radio programs, and book discussions are some of the formats used to bring humanities programs to the public. Humanities scholars must play a role in all phases of the project. Special consideration will be given to grant proposals that address our current initiative, "Telling Florida Stories: Strengthening Florida Communities."

FHC has two deadline periods for major grants (more than $2,000) each year. Deadlines for the first grant application period are: April 8, preliminary proposal; May 8, final proposal; and July 8, notification given. Deadlines for the second grant application period are: Oct. 7, preliminary proposal; Nov. 6, final proposal; and Jan. 6, notification given.

FHC also awards mini-grants of up to $2,000 to nonprofit organizations to produce public humanities programs. Scholar grants of up to $2,000 are also available to humanities scholars for research on humanities topics of statewide interest that have the potential to become public programs of resources. The deadlines for mini-grants and scholar grants are: February 20, May 20, August 20, and Nov. 20.

Thank You to our Teachers Center Sponsors

We would like to thank the following organizations and businesses that have made contributions to the Florida Center for Teachers:

- The St. Petersburg Times
- Publix Super Markets Inc.
- Columbia County Schools Foundation
- Alachua County Public Schools Foundation, Inc.
- Brevard Schools Foundation
- DeSoto County Education Foundation
- Escambia County School District
- Polk Education Foundation
- Madison Co. Foundation for Excellence in Education
- Hillsborough County Education Foundation

Thanks for your Response to our Survey

Thanks to the nearly 700 FORUM readers who returned the reader surveys enclosed in the Summer 2002 issue of FORUM. The overwhelming majority of respondents were enthusiastic about our Florida focus and very complimentary of the magazine. Your responses will help us in planning future issues of FORUM. We encourage you to write us with any comments about or suggestions for FORUM. Please send them to: FORUM, FHC, 599 2nd Street South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, or email jfarver@flahum.org.

Representatives from organizations that received FHC grants gathered recently at the FHC offices. Shown, from left to right, are: Melinda Jay, Gulf Coast Community College; Steven Davidson, Florida Moving Image Archive; Jose Casanova, City of Miami; Jeanette Tooley, Cummer Museum; Julie Henry-Matus, FHC staff; Jan Luth, Heritage Village; Clifton Lewis, Neighborhood Improvement Corporation of Bartow; Ellen Babb, Heritage Village; Bun Hap Prat, Asian FACE Center; Marty Ardren and Roger Block, Trail of the Lost Tribes; Altamense Barnes, John G. Riley Center for African American History and Culture. Standing: Susan Lockwood, FHC grant director; and Rick Lang, Crealde School of Art.
FLORIDA’S SEASHELL CASTLE | ESSAY BY MICHAEL GANNON

As I write these words in my study, I pass my hands over the sharp-edged chunk of shell rock that I found when, as a boy, I explored the battle-ments and grounds of Spain’s never-con-quered castle, Castillo de San Marcos, in St. Augustine. I have vivid memories of climbing about the castle’s cannon and letting my imagination soar as I pictured its major battles. When I rowed my boat past the old fortress to cast a net for mullet or shrimp, I envisioned the artillery of that period could breach them.

Why? Because the walls and parapets were constructed from resilient seashells—tiny calcified shells forged over many millennia into shell rock that the Spaniards quarried from Anastasia Island, the long, narrow barrier island that separates St. Augustine from the sea.

To understand how this unlikely urban armor originated we have to go back roughly 2 million years to what geologists call the Cenozoic Era. It was then that violent ocean storms threw up banks of small shells and shell fragments on beaches at four sites: Anastasia Island; Washington Oaks State Park, below Crescent Beach; Jupiter Beach; and, outside Florida, on the West Coast of Africa. The shells had been formed by a tiny mollusk known technically as donax. When the storm waters receded and sand covered the shell marl, the tightly compressed mixture of calcium carbonate and sand eventually hardened to form a compact fossiliferous limestone, on the surface of which individual, whole, or broken shells were massively visible.

The existence of this stone was not known to St. Augustine’s founder, Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, whose 800 Spanish settlers in 1565 established themselves on the mainland opposite the island and christened their habitat La Ciudad de San Agustín. Initially their homes and public buildings were of wattle and daub construction because, as the fleet chaplain complained, “stone is nowhere to be found.” In 1583, however, Timucuan natives of the district took a Spanish detail to the island and showed how, by digging through the sandy top-soil, vast quantities of shell rock were exposed.

For lack of the proper tools to quarry and move the stone, the natives had not made use of it in their buildings. Neither now did the Spaniards in theirs, for the same reason. But this changed 92 years later when necessity lent them invention and determination. The necessity was a fortress capable of surviving both weather and British gunfire. By 1672 no fewer than nine wooden forts had stood at St. Augustine, two on the island and the remainder on the mainland. All but one had been burned or had rotted away in the water table and rains. Now, with the city a helpless victim to a British pirate raid in 1668 and newly threatened by the founding two years later of British Charles Towne (Charleston) just 250 miles to the north, Gov. Manuel de Cendoya, “with spade in hand,” broke ground for a durable fortress to be built entirely of Anastasia shell rock, which the Spaniards by that date called coquina.

With axes and picks, pry bars and wedges, Spanish engineers and workers cut out rectangular slabs of the calcified shells and placed them on the beds of ox-drawn wagons. The labor force consisted mainly of impressed (though paid) Florida and Georgia coastal-isle natives, Spanish convicts and English prisoners, and African slaves. When first quarried, the rock was light yellow and spongy; it gradually darkened and hardened somewhat after being in the open air and the sun. Taken to the water’s edge, the rock slabs were lightered across Matanzas River to the construction site, which was set high on a plateau of earth. There, other workmen operating chains and pulleys raised the slabs, one on top of another, and joined them with a quick-setting lime mortar fashioned in two near-by kilns from oyster shells.

By 1695, 23 years after the dedicatory spade, the castle was substantially complete. It was a square structure with jutting diamond-shaped bastions at its four corners, a design originated by the great French military engineer Sébastien le Prestre Vauban (1633–1707). Its 20-foot-high bastions and walls (curtains) were 16 feet thick at their base, narrowing to 9 feet at their tops, where the parapets bristled with cannon. To prevent the intrusion of moisture the entire exterior was finished with off-white lime stucco. A decorative red band ran around the upper surface.

In November 1702, just as the Spaniards feared, St. Augustine was invested by an 800-man force of Englishmen and Indians from Carolina. The entire population of the city, 1,500 souls, took refuge in the castle, bringing with them personal belongings and cattle; the cattle were placed in the moat.
from which seawater had been withdrawn. Col. James Moore, commanding the attackers, set up an artillery battery to the south of the Castillo and began a bombardment that he was confident would breach the castle walls.

But to the surprise of Englishman and Spaniard alike, the coquina possessed an entirely unanticipated property. Still relatively soft, it did not fracture when hit by a cannon ball. It absorbed the ball. Cannonading the Castillo was akin to tossing bowling balls into mud. One can easily imagine Moore stamping his feet in frustration. Some of the balls rolled off the coquina surface. Others stuck in the stone. At the end of a day the castle looked like a chocolate chip cookie. The Spaniards recycled the English cannonballs and sent them back with prejudice.

After 50 fruitless days of siege, Moore and his force withdrew to Carolina, thoroughly humiliated by seashells. And one would have thought that no further English attempt would be made to reduce this particular castle by artillery. But, no, another English war maker named James Oglethorpe, governor of the new colony of Georgia, a man who seems to have learned few lessons from 1702, came south 38 years later to try conclusions with the same fortress, and with exactly the same results. Oglethorpe had more cannons, 30 to Moore’s four, and cannonballs of heavier weight. But his battering fire had just as little effect. Wrote one of his officers: the native rock “will not splinter but will give way to cannon ball as though you would stick a knife into cheese.” After 27 days of siege, Oglethorpe, too, slinked home in disgrace. Once again the seashells ruled. That 308-year-old structure still stands tall but now shows considerable wear. The years and the wind and rainfall have almost entirely eroded its original stucco finish, allowing moisture to threaten the stability of the naked coquina. To preserve the rock, the National Park Service, which administers the Castillo, plans to apply a waterproof coating of plaster much like that employed by the Spaniards.

If you want to see the unshielded coquina, like the chunk I hold here in my hand, you would be well advised to visit the Castillo at your earliest opportunity. Touch the seashells—and imagine!

MICHAEL GANNON is Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Florida and the author, most recently, of Pearl Harbor Betrayed.
"It is their capacity to change, elevate, and improve both the common civic life and individual lives that make the cultivation of the humanities important to the American people.... An appreciation of the thought and expression of American culture is an imperative of good citizenship in this democracy."

—Merrill Peterson, The Humanities and the American Promise, Report of the Colloquium on the Humanities and the American People, October 1987

It was considered a radical idea: Bring humanities studies out of the ivory tower and down to the public square. Empower people with a broader perspective so they can more effectively deal with the issues they face in modern times. Promote their understanding of history and its relevance to current events. Discuss the philosophical underpinnings of societal beliefs. Make literature come alive. Dig into archaeology.

This idea was born out of the “anything’s possible New Frontier of the Kennedy administration,” explained Gail Leftwich, president of the Federation of State Humanities Councils. With the space program at full tilt and science and technology research subsidized by the government, humanities scholars argued that a public agency was needed to support and maintain a thriving intellectual and cultural life.

In 1965 Congress created the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts. The enabling legislation proclaimed:

An advanced civilization must not limit its efforts to science and technology alone but must give full value and support to the other great branches of scholarly and cultural activity in order to achieve a better understanding of the past, a better analysis of the present, and a better view of the future.

The legislation called for creating nonprofit NEH affiliates in each state to bridge the gap between town and gown and, in so doing, help society benefit more from the work of its scholars. Today there are 56 councils, one in every state and U.S. territory. Since their inception in the 1970s, these councils, the Florida Humanities Council among them, have become important sources of humanities education for Americans from all walks of life. Over the years, the philosophy underlying this work has remained the same: Educated,
Cuban American Heritage Festival awarded Humanities Council grant

Searching for the Other Florida
Two Hundred Miles from Anywhere
Historic Wakulla Springs Lodge, Tallahassee
August 1-6

“Two hundred miles from anywhere” was Gloria Jahoda’s description of Tallahassee in The Other Florida. Participants in this seminar will search for the Florida often overlooked in travel brochures and TV programs. It is a Florida sparked with stories of land speculation, slavery, floods, and plagues of yellow fever but also heroic characters, exotic tropical islands, grand plantations, and even what some claim is the biblical Garden of Eden. Our focus will be the people and cultures that formed today’s Apalachicola/Tallahassee region. We will discover the land, the work, and the history of this fascinating region of our state.

Historians, archeologists, filmakers, and artists will join us in the natural beauty of Wakulla. Together we will explore the rich history we share as Floridians.

Residents scholars: Dr. Gary Montana

The Florida Chal 1985

A HISTORY OF CONTRIBUTION
Florida Humanities Council brings gathering to Fernandina. 

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awarded $88,700 W.K. Kellogg 

Foundation grant to examine Moral 

Leadership 


"Making Florida Home" initiative begins 

Florida State Legislature approves $5 million appropriation to build a Florida Center for Teachers on the USF-St. Pete campus 

New grant lines: Mini Grants and Scholar/Humanist Fellowships, up to $2,000 

Parallel Lives program debuts, goes on to perform in 26 Florida cities 

Summer seminars held at Fl. Center for Teachers for first time 

Fran Cary becomes executive director; FHC moves from Tampa's Ybor City to the Florida Center for Teachers Building at USF-St. Pete 

Commemoration of 30 years of grantmaking and exploring the Florida experience 

First FLORIDA GATHERING held in Okeechobee, celebrating small town and rural Florida through cultural tourism weekends. Other Gatherings have since taken place in Homosassa, Polk County, Mount Dora, Fernandina Beach, DeLand, and Everglades City.
thoughtful, informed citizens are the bedrock of a strong democracy.

This year, the Florida Humanities Council (FHC) is celebrating its 30th anniversary. Over the past three decades, it has distributed more than $30 million in federal, state, and private funds for programs designed to help Floridians better understand their world.

Through these programs, which have taken place in even the remotest parts of the state, Floridians have learned about their state's multicultural heritage, literary and political heroes, environmental jewels, urban and rural development, prehistory and early history, modern demographic changes, and social issues. They have listened to fascinating lectures, shared ideas in a myriad of discussion groups, attended dramatic performances and exhibits, walked Florida's highways and byways through cultural tourism weekends, and participated in historical re-enactments and cultural festivals. Through it all, the FHC has focused on providing opportunities for thoughtful citizen involvement—and on telling the story of Florida to a burgeoning number of residents, many of whom are from somewhere else.

"We probably focus on history more than other state councils," said Francine Curro Cary, FHC's current executive director. "It's because we have so many newcomers who don't know much about the state. How do you make a new place home? How do you form an attachment to the state? We believe that the humanities are the pathways to the knowledge and experiences that help us make Florida home. That's why they are essential to building community and creating informed citizens."

A look at FHC's own history shows an organization that has evolved over the years, changing with the times, working in different ways to extend its reach, and forming partnerships with other organizations to enrich the intellectual, cultural, and civic lives of Floridians.

The Florida council was organized in the early 1970s and awarded its first grants in 1973. Like other state councils, its initial efforts focused on connecting the humanities with public policy issues. The topics of these projects ranged from population trends and individual freedoms to medicine and morality to race relations and culture. Other public policy topics studied in the early years were prisons, health care, aging, and religious freedom.

"I think the state humanities council movement was a pioneering movement in that it was the first time people talked about the public issues, linking citizens with the humanities," said Donald R. Eastman, who in 1974 became the first executive director of the Florida council. At that time the council was primarily a grant-making agency. Funds were passed from the National Endowment for the Humanities to the states, which then re-granted the money to individuals and organizations within their respective states. "We had about $150,000 a year at first," said Eastman, who took the job only a few years after earning his doctorate in English at the University of Florida.

The year that he became director, the council focused on the theme, "Far from the Madding Crowd: Population Density and the Future of Florida," a topic that reflected prescience as it turned out. In 1976, William Brennan succeeded Eastman, who is now president of Eckerd College in St. Petersburg. Brennan, formerly a professor of communication arts at William Paterson College in New Jersey, had also served as executive director of a consortium of 14 New Jersey colleges and universities.

That experience came in handy when Brennan successfully lobbied the Florida Legislature for state funds, making the FHC the first council in the country to receive both federal and state monies. He met tirelessly with the governor and other elected and appointed officials to establish think tanks, in which humanities scholars discussed state problems and proposed solutions. As he had written in a council newsletter in 1981, "We all know academicians whose minds are powerful and whose vision is piercing, but the voice of their expertise and conviction is not often heard beyond the faculty lounge."

Brennan made sure their voices were heard. The council launched the "Governor's Challenge Programs," in which FHC convened groups of citizens throughout the state to respond to then-Governor Bob Graham's request for creative solutions to social issues in Florida. One year it was "Creative Crime Control." Another year it was "Growing Up and Growing Old."

During these years the council also revised its guidelines to include projects on oral history, museum exhibitions, and library discussion programs, in addition to public policy projects. Seeking to extend its reach, the
In one year, fourth grade teacher Faye Cook "dealt with the death of a student’s parents, the incarceration of a student’s parents, drug issues, and children who have been shuffled from pillar to post most of their lives," she said. While trying to help her students cope with these problems, she was also trying to prepare them for the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Tests—and she was studying for her National Board certification.

By the time Cook arrived at the Florida Center for Teachers that summer of 1999, she was reeling from such a "highly draining and stressful" year.

Teacher Elizabeth Frank felt the same way when she arrived at the Center in 2000. After 29 years in the classroom, she felt so stressed that she wanted to retire. "Teaching seemed to be more and more a life-threatening burden to my nervous system," she said.

Like most of the teachers who come to the Center, Cook and Frank were seasoned professionals, educational leaders held up as models for other teachers to emulate. And, like so many others, they were struggling to survive the increasing pressures of their jobs. They were looking for something to help recharge their love of teaching.

And that is exactly what the Center tries to do.

"The Center provides an intellectual space that is missing from most teachers’ lives," said Susan Lockwood, director of the program from 1993 to 2002.

"Over and over teachers tell me that they chose to teach because they loved learning, but once they get into the classroom there are few opportunities to learn and grow intellectually.”

The Center offers K-12 teachers an intellectually stimulating professional retreat, a place to learn from great scholars and from each other. They often come tired and demoralized. Inspired by a week of reading, reflection, study, discussion, fieldtrips, and professional camaraderie, they leave feeling renewed intellectually and professionally.

Cook and Frank are still teaching today, and they give much of the credit to their experiences at Center seminars. “It was an incredible week of learning, with intriguing conversations about what has shaped Florida into the mosaic of humanity that currently exists,” said Cook, a Polk County resident who attended the seminar, “Searching for a Sense of Place.”

Frank, an elementary art teacher in Fort Myers, said she was “enlightened, refreshed, and
inspired" by her experience at the Center. "Suddenly I became a student again and learned about contemporary humanities material and topics I had never had the opportunity to study and knew little about," she said. "I could not possibly give up teaching just yet! After all, I now have new material to share with my students, and desire to do just that!"

More than 2,000 Florida teachers have come to the Center since its inception in 1993. Most are recognized leaders in their field, with top credentials, impressive degrees, and awards. If teachers had military rankings, they would be the majors and generals of their schools, leading the battle to educate Florida's youth amid soaring enrollments, dwindling resources, and educational reform. Last year 90 percent of the participants were either Board Certified and/or Teachers of the Year in their counties.

As educational leaders, they take what they've learned at the Center back to their schools and share it with other teachers as well as with their students. It becomes resource material for the entire school.

Ellen Vinson, a teacher with 30 years of classroom experience, said her students have loved the information she brought back from a seminar on Florida archaeology in 1998. She and the other teacher-participants at the Center met with archaeologists to explore the many-faceted issue of historical preservation versus development. They also visited Indian mounds and examined artifacts of Florida's first people.

"I felt a connection to the past I had never experienced before," Vinson said. "I brought back new insights and a wealth of material to share with my fourth-grade class as they studied Florida history."

Shari Valencic-Ursel facilitated a year-long study of the media after attending a seminar at the Center on media ethics. Her third grade class visited the editorial board of the Sarasota Herald Tribune, analyzed race and gender bias on television, and published a class newspaper. The Sarasota Education Foundation even helped fund some of the costs. Her students voted it one of their "favorite studies" of the year; she said. But what particularly impressed Valencic-Ursel was their "depth of learning."

In addition to its week-long summer seminars, the Center offers annual alumni programs throughout the state. Last year the Center designed the Florida component of the "Teaching American History" seminars offered to teachers in Orange and Broward counties. This summer, six seminars are scheduled, and already the Center has twice the number of applications for spaces available.

With the loss of state funding two years ago, the Center had to drastically cut the number of seminars it provided, according to Fran Cary, executive director of the Florida Humanities Council, "We are working hard to raise that money, because we know first-hand that this program helps keep our best teachers in the classroom."
By Ronald I. Habin

Juli lives in an Orlando center for homeless women. She works evenings as a bagger in a supermarket. She also studies the works of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and other great thinkers. They've taught her to reach for the stars.

"The great thinkers were not afraid to go out there into their dark night," she says. Her dream? She wants to become a college professor.

Juli is one of 11 low-income people who have graduated from the Clemente Course in the Humanities, funded by FHC at Valencia Community College in Orlando. The Clemente Program is based on the belief that humanities education can enrich the lives of the "urban poor" and help them to make the journey from the periphery of society to its center.

Writer Earl Shorris created The Clemente Program on the lower east side of New York City in 1995. In his groundbreaking book, Riches for the Poor, he suggested a new educational paradigm: Poorly educated people can gain a better understanding of themselves and their world by becoming familiar with the works of the giants of philosophy, history, literature, art, and the other humanities. This knowledge can help them to develop broader perspectives, envision different possibilities, and become stronger citizens who contribute more to society. The program was named after the Roberto Clemente Community Center in New York City where the first
Courses were conducted.

Valencia Professor Elizabeth Eschbach reports that her students in the Clemente course are quick to grasp the ideas of the great thinkers, painters, and playwrights. In fact, they are more adept than traditional college students at coming up with real-life examples of the great thinkers' principles, she says. The Clemente students also show enthusiasm that carries their class discussions out of the classroom and down the hallways, she adds.

Juli (student surnames are withheld to protect their privacy) says one of her favorite books was Plato's Allegory in a Cave, because it helped her to understand and appreciate her own value system, an insight that made her feel empowered. Her classmate, Alfreda, says the book helped her realize that she had been locked inside her own cave. It awakened her out of the self-described bondage of her former circumstance and helped her find a "new way out the door," she says.

Their interaction with professors was also inspiring, Juli says. She recalls how some faculty members came to the center for homeless women to talk with Clemente students. That extra effort "restored her faith in humanity," she says. These role models have also affected the way she deals with her own 13-year-old daughter. She adds, now, instead of nagging about less-than-stellar grades, Juli says she approaches her with the same enthusiasm of accomplishment exemplified by her Clemente professors.

With a grant from FHC, the University of South Florida conducted Clemente courses in Tampa and St. Petersburg in 2001. Several Clemente courses have been developed throughout the United States with grants provided by state humanities councils. John Scolaro, director of The Clemente Program at Valencia, is hoping to offer the course this fall for full college credit.

Perhaps the soul of the course is reflected in a letter sent by founder Earl Shorris to Scolaro last fall for the graduation ceremony: "One need not have a permanent home or a Harvard diploma to engage Socrates. He is always there for those of us who recognize our own humanity and take pleasure in thinking about it."

More information about The Clemente Course (offered to men and women) at Valencia Community College, is available at the website: http://valenciacc.edu/clemente/

RONALD L. HABIN is an anthropologist living in Orlando.
FHC Helps Illuminate, Celebrate State's African-American Heritage

The small community of Eatonville has a special identity as the first incorporated African-American town in the United States—and the hometown of novelist-folklorist-anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston. Yet, 15 years ago some Eatonville residents feared this identity would be wiped out by the metropolitan sprawl of Orlando, which was growing ever closer each year.

They wondered how they could preserve their historic community, just 10 miles north of Orlando. “We were a grassroots group, hoping to lift up our community,” says N.Y. Nathiri, a university librarian and Eatonville native. They decided to form the Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community.

With no experience in fundraising or applying for grants, they approached the Florida Humanities Council (FHC) and asked for help. FHC awarded them a grant to organize the first-ever Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts.

This festival, held in 1990, attracted some 10,000 people. Since then it has grown into an internationally recognized week-long annual celebration of African-American culture. It has attracted renowned scholars such as John Hope Franklin and Alan Lomax; writers Maya Angelou and Alice Walker; and celebrities Bill Cosby, Denzel Washington, Ruby Dee, and Ossie Davis. This year, nearly 110,000 people attended.

This local venture has become a model for communities across the state. It demonstrates how heritage and tourism can link up to revive and benefit a community, an early example of what is now called cultural or heritage tourism. But more importantly, it has become "a source of great community pride," Nathiri says. When she and other Eatonville residents started out, they just had an idea and some hope. The FHC grant "came at exactly the right time," she says. "It provided us with both the inspiration to continue and the credibility we needed with other funders."

The Eatonville festival is only one of hundreds of projects funded by the FHC over the past 30 years to help illuminate the African-American experience and make a difference. Since 1973, the FHC has awarded more than $2 million to create resources and programs exploring the African-American heritage in 1,500 Florida communities. These grants have brought scholars and grassroots organizations together to scour archival records and photographs, conduct oral histories, and pore through public records.

History professor Mike Denham of Florida Southern College says that working with a community to revive its history has become one of the most rewarding aspects of his work. "It's amazing to see how the recovery of history can rebuild a community."

Brought together by a grant awarded by FHC in 1997, Denham and fellow historian Canter Brown worked with members of the Bartow Neighborhood Improvement Corporation to piece together the history of that town's African-American community. As part of this community-building effort, the Bartow organization has sponsored the African American Heritage Conference for the past three years. The two-day event brings cutting-edge scholarship to this small Polk County town.

Brown, now a historian at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), has worked on FHC-sponsored programs across the state. He says he has seen an escalation of research and interest in African-American history in the past decade, especially on the local level. He credits FHC not only for funding the research and programs, but for building relationships between civic organizations and scholars.

These academic-civic partnerships, working to revitalize communities by illuminating their histories, are exploring such African-American neighborhoods as Tampa's Central Avenue, Gainesville's Seminary Lane and Pleasant Street District, Miami's Overtown, and Tallahassee's Frenchtown. This work has resulted in the preservation of historic buildings; the development of lecture series, panel discussions, scholar-led tours, traditional and interactive exhibits; the creation of new websites, books, articles and brochures; and the organization of cultural tourism weekends and teacher workshops.

One of Florida's most exotic stories was researched with the help of an FHC grant awarded to University of North Florida historian Dan Schafer. Schafer traveled to the village of Yang Yang in the interior of Senegal where he interviewed village elders and the griot (the tribal oral historian) to document the royal lineage of Anna Kingsley. Anna, reputed to be a tribal princess, was cap-
Writers Bill Maxwell and Beverly Coyle grew up in Florida only a few miles apart, but they lived in separate worlds. Maxwell is black; Coyle is white. They were children during the 1950s when “Jim Crow” laws sanctioned racial segregation.

Their lives intersected for the first time in 1998, when the FHC asked them to participate in a program called “Parallel Lives.” This program, designed to provide insight into the Jim Crow era and create a model for interracial dialogue, has caused thousands of lives to intersect in 26 towns and cities throughout Florida.

In public forums from 1998 to 2002, Maxwell and Coyle told stories about their childhoods and shared insights about this era of racial isolation. Nearly 7,000 people—Hispanics, blacks, Asians, Native Americans and whites—came out to listen, ask questions, and share their own stories.

The stories were as varied as the audience. Some described acts of racial oppression and violence. Others compared race relations in Florida to those in other states. Teenagers questioned the relationship between the past and the present, asking, “Are things really better?” or “How do we right wrongs that took place before we were born?”

To ensure a diverse audience in each community, the FHC developed “curious coalitions,” to sponsor Parallel Lives. In many communities, these partnerships flowered: Black and white historical societies worked together in one community to create programs for high school students; race-study groups were organized in three communities; and two communities experimented with their own versions of Parallel Lives—one featuring attorneys who work at the same law firm, the other featuring two city council members.

Thousands of letters and evaluations of Parallel Lives presentations over the past four years attest to the profound effect the program has had on the lives of Floridians.

Maxwell and Coyle said the experience changed them too. “It made me less angry,” Maxwell said. He thinks of race in a more open and less judgmental way and is more willing to listen to others’ opinions on the subject, he said.

Coyle said she’s been transformed by her “sustained friendship” with Maxwell and other African Americans involved in the project. She also rediscovered that putting two stories together “says more than each individual story can say by itself” and is “one of the most reliable ways to come to a kind of truth.”

Maxwell and Coyle, who originally crafted their presentations from personal essays with the help of writer-performer Phyllis McEwen, are currently adapting Parallel Lives into a play. It will be staged at American Theatre in St. Petersburg May 23 through June 15. Their essays, initially written at the request of the FHC, were published in the Summer, 1999, issue of FORUM.
Much has changed in Florida and the world since FHC was founded in 1973. We asked Florida historian and frequent FORUM contributor Gary Mormino to apprise us of the state of our state 30 years ago.

Florida’s Year of Reckoning

"May you be born in interesting times." — A Chinese proverb

There are years that ask questions," wrote Zora Neale Hurston, "and years that answer." Historians still debate whether the year 1973 represented the last gasp of the 1960s or signified a new age of anxiety. For a nation born of optimism and baptized in rising expectations, 1973 rattled Americans’ confidence and dashed dreams. In Florida, a multitude of problems exposed the state’s vulnerabilities. Local and state leaders responded in remarkable ways to new and old crises. Out of this milieu, the Florida Endowment for the Humanities emerged.

Basking in its reputation as the country’s fastest-growing state, Florida had welcomed nearly a million newcomers since 1970. Streams of retirees, immigrants, and snowbirds pushed Florida’s population to 7.4 million inhabitants. Sunbelt Florida edged past Rustbelt New Jersey as America’s eighth most populous state. A thousand new residents poured into the peninsula each day.


Governor Askew presided over a party and a state in which registered Democrats outnumbered Republicans almost three-to-one. Imbued with honor and decency, West Florida populism and New South boosterism, Askew possessed style and substance. His reputation soared as national commentators applauded his accomplishments and pondered his candidacy for president in 1976.

Although few realized it, the future pointed to the Republican Party. Quietly but steadily, the Republicans built their base with daily streams of GOP transplants and native scalawags. In 1972, presidential candidate George Wallace had swept Florida, a harbinger of a swing to the right.

Winds of reform and change whip-lashed Florida. The governor urged legislators to address long-neglected issues of environmental and educational reform. The Miami Herald applaud ed the legislature’s efforts, awarding it an A-plus grade for education. Noting the tough new laws addressing campaign contributions, the Herald trumpeted: “A Bad Year in Tallahassee for the Special Interests.” The designation of Big Cypress Swamp as a national park represented a singular triumph for environmentalists and politicians.

For a state that trafficked in optimism, Sunshine State cheer was in short supply. Daily, it seemed, newspapers catalogued new indescritions and exposés. Watergate hung like a funeral pall, becoming a synonym for corruption and cynicism. The resignation of Vice President Spiro Agnew—convicted of taking bribes while Governor of Maryland—simply confirmed Americans’ distaste for politicians, whom they ranked last on a professional-trust scale. Doctors and garbage men scored the highest.

Tongue wagging was hardly confined to Washington.

Floridians learned that the White House plumbers, a secret team of operatives directed to burglarize the Democratic Party National headquarters, included four anti-Castro Miami Cubans. Investigators traced Watergate tracks to offices in Tampa and Jacksonville, to Orlando call girls and CIA agents in Miami. Governor Askew discovered that his office had been bugged since 1971.

Scandal tainted promising political careers. Accused of using public employees on his Gadsden County farm, Lt. Governor Tom Adams narrowly avoided impeachment. U.S. Senator Ed Gurney reeled from charges that he had funneled campaign contributions and cash pay-offs into a $300,000 slush fund.

African Americans seethed at the glacial pace of change. Glaringly, only seven of Dade County’s 1,500 firemen were black. While African Americans comprised 25 percent of Jacksonville’s population, they comprised only 5 percent of the city’s police department. Police patrolled Florida school hallways, attempting to pacify black and white students only recently brought together by court-ordered desegregation. Optimists pointed to signs of success. Twenty-one African Americans, three of them state representatives, now held public office.

While blacks rebelled at the status quo, Hispanics exulted in their newfound sense of power. In an astonishingly brief time, Cuban émigrés transformed Miami and Dade County. A Miami Herald headline augured, "Latinos Could Elect Mayors in 1980s." The Miami City Council appointed Maurice Ferré mayor in April 1973. That month also marked another milestone. When Caridad Márquez, age 69, stepped off an Eastern Airline turbo-prop on April 6, 1973, it marked the last "freedom flight" out of Cuba. Since 1959, more than a quarter million Cubans had fled the island for new lives in Florida. Future refugees would have to find clandestine routes to Miami.

Feminists were energized by an outburst of organization and reform, including Roe v. Wade, the historic U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. While women in Florida achieved historic gains, they also suffered a dramatic setback. Pensacola’s Naval Air Station welcomed the first class to include women flight cadets. In Hillsborough County, Lenora Ann Booth became Tampa’s first police officer, while voters sent Betty...
Castor to the county commission. When Paula Hawkins, "the Maitland housewife," took her oath as Florida Public Service Commissioner, she became the first woman elected to the body as well as the only Republican to hold a statewide office. Voters also elected female mayors in Fort Lauderdale and Tallahassee. The Florida Legislature, however, delivered a crushing blow to the national effort to pass an Equal Rights Amendment when legislators, pressured by a furious conservative assault, rejected the measure. Floridians were saved from unisex restrooms.

Like Banquo's ghost, the specter of Vietnam tormented Americans. To a nation and people characterized by "the right stuff" and a "can do" philosophy, Vietnam offered a bitter dose of humility. In 1973, the only question was when, not if, South Vietnam would fall to the Communists. In March, the first wave of American POWs returned home to a forest of yellow ribbons. John McCain, Florida's most famous POW, reunited with his family in Jacksonville. (McCain later moved to Arizona and became a U.S. Senator.) Ghosts lingered. A highly publicized trial of anti-war veterans, known as the Gainesville Eight, tested the limits of civil liberties and civility.

In spasms of shock and disbelief, the year's most destabilizing event occurred in the Middle East. On October 6, 1973, Egyptian and Syrian forces attacked Israel. The Yom Kippur War quickly assumed global dimensions. The United States and Soviet Union may have supplied the combatants with F-4 Phantoms and Skyhawks, MIG-21 Interceptors and Gabriel missiles, and Patton and T-54 tanks; but Arab leaders unsheathed an even more powerful weapon: an oil embargo. Angry at American support for Israel, OPEC (the oil producing export countries) cut the supply of oil to the United States. The oil crisis hammered home the point that the Superpowers had limits, that the United States no longer controlled its destiny.

Floridians awoke December 1 to an eerie quiet: a Sunday when the sale of gasoline was banned. In the affluent post-war decades, Americans had fallen in love with their big automobiles. Big Oil had ensured and sustained a drive-in civilization. The automobile seemed a Florida birthright. From courtship to vacations, from worship to vocations, Fords and Chevrolets defined and nourished dreams and lifestyles. In a "Wish you were here" state, getting here and getting around depended upon four-wheel gas-guzzlers and foreign oil tankers. Who cared if the automobile generated low-density suburban sprawl and gridlock traffic? Gas was cheap, plentiful, and an American way of life.


Orlando was the epicenter of the great gas crisis. Since its opening in October 1971, Walt Disney World had galvanized and re-directed Central Florida's economy and future. But fuel shortages and gas lines threatened the Magic Kingdom and tourist attractions outside of Orlando. Bible World, a planned $11 million, "full-scale Palestinian village," fell victim to the economic crisis.

Floridians adapted to the new customs of reduced highway speed limits (55 m.p.h.), inflated prices (50-cents-a-gallon gasoline), and adjusted lifestyles (the Jacksonville City Hall thermostat set at 70 degrees in the summer). In Key West, city officials encouraged employees to wear hot pants and shorts to work.

Coping with explosive growth, Floridians reconciled years of living dangerously with a future pockmarked by the realities of urban gridlock and environmental calamity. Dade County became a poster child for anti-growth advocates. In one seven-day span, residents gasped as a typhoid epidemic scourged a migrant labor camp, contaminated water caused a massive fish-kill in Biscayne Bay, and brown-outs paralyzed downtown Miami.

The age of perpetual shortages seemed permanently at hand. However, Cassandras predicting doom and gloom underestimated Florida's resourcefulness and Americans' love affair with sunshine and beaches. Pointing to rows of vacant buildings, a developer explained, "Florida is not overbuilt; it's undersold."

Like Delphic Oracles, Floridians read the entrails of 1973 with a muddled vision. The year had brought uncertainty and disillusionment, but not even gas lines and dire prophecies could slake Florida fever. The philosopher-insurance magnate-land baron John D. MacArthur showed he understood the power the Florida dream held over Americans when he said: "You just can't tell an American he can't move to Florida."

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Transition from southern backwater to New Florida begins in 1940

On the Brink: In 1940, the shroud of global war and the Great Depression hung over Florida. A new Florida was emerging, richer and older, less southern and more international.

By Gary R. Mormino

Florida in 1940 stood precariously between its rock-hard rural, southern traditions, particularly in the Panhandle and upper regions, and a swelling wave of northern influences, especially in the fast-growing urban Gulf and Atlantic resort cities. Technology was urging change. The automobile was bringing restlessness to the backwoods and bayous. The buoyant economy, boosted by a record flow of tourists, promised dramatic changes.

Writers for Florida: A Guide to the Southernmost Suite (1939) hinted at these changes, observing, "politically and socially, Florida has its own North and South, but its northern area is strictly southern and its southern area is strictly northern."

In at least one respect, however, Florida remained a southern backwater. Segregation was the law and custom of the land. Vestiges of the Old South appeared everywhere. April 26, Confederate Memorial Day, was a state holiday. To the state's black residents, Florida's culture and politics mirrored the South: a legacy of slavery, secession, Reconstruction, Jim Crow traditions, white primaries, and a frightening level of interracial violence and lynching.

Before 1940, Florida—not Mississippi or Alabama—led the South in per capita lynchings. The lynchings occurred not only in Perry, Newberry, and Madison, but also in Inverness, St. Petersburg, and DeLand. The 1935 state census underscored Florida's heritage: Three-fourths of the state's residents were born in Florida or the South. Not a single classroom in Florida was integrated in 1940. And when the 1939 Florida Legislature convened, not a single black, woman, or Republican took a seat.

Linking all Floridians was the land itself. Heat, humidity, and long growing seasons had forged a distinctive identity and attachment to the land. While it is true that all states possess unique sub-regions, no other southern state reflects Florida's environmental diversity, the result of extraordinary longitudinal boundaries. Florida encompasses 8,500 miles of tidal shoreline. Tallahassee, the state capital, lies 20 miles from the Georgia border and 500 miles from Miami. Key West is 800 miles from Pensacola but just 90 miles from Cuba. Floridians adapted to a climate that could be oppressively humid, bone-chillingly cold, or tropically wet.

Elizabeth S. Morgan, a native of Havana, Fla., writes, "Back then, time was measured by the seasons. The weather, that culprit or creator of crops and adventure, was at the center of intimacy among hunters and fishermen, mostly farmers by occupation... They speculated about it, prayed about it, feared it, and held it sacred. Events were recalled by the kind of day it had been."

Most large cities boasted a few air-conditioned movie theaters or department stores, though private homes still relied on the cooling breeze of electric fans. Floridians revelled in air-cooled opulence at movie palaces such as the Caribe on Miami Beach, the Ritz in Marianna, and the Dixie Theatre in Apalachicola. In Tampa, Miami, and Jacksonville, Maas Brothers, Burdines, and Cohen Brothers showcased the latest fashions in air-conditioned comfort, drawing customers from the hinterlands.

Tourists flocked to Florida in roadsters or by train to pursue a variety of pleasures, fishing for largemouth bass on legendary Lake Apopka and hunting bear in the depths of Tates Hell. They shot turkeys in Vernon and took airboat rides into the Big Cypress. They played golf at Boca Raton and cast for bonefish in Florida Bay. They marveled at Bok Tower in Lake Wales and Sunken Gardens in St. Pete. The state's most popular tourist attraction was Marineland near St. Augustine; the most popular destination was Miami,
drawing almost 2 million tourists in 1940. Travelers encountered a delightful series of small towns as they followed the Gulf Stream south along the old Dixie Highway, U.S. 1, where tourist courts, eateries, and gasoline stations had begun to reconfigure the landscape.

Even as prosperity brought change, Florida’s writers memorialized the state’s vanishing past. Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings’s 1936 classic, The Yearling, the poignant story of the relationship between Jody Baxter and his adopted fawn, helped authenticate the denigrated Florida Cracker and became the first book dealing with a Florida subject to win the Pulitzer Prize. In 1940, Zora Neale Hurston, Florida’s greatest native-born writer was at work on her autobiography, Dust Tracks on the Road. An anthropologist and gifted raconteur, Hurston drew her stories from the people she knew best—jook artists, muleskinner, turpentine “lifers,” and phosphate miners. With folklorist Alan Lomax, she helped capture an oral tradition that was fading fast. Hurston frequently packed a loaded pistol during her research; woods riders and foremen were not accustomed to black folklorists toting recording machines. Jacksonville native Stetson Kennedy dropped out of the University of Florida to work for the newly created Florida Writers’ Project, a New Deal cultural unit. Kennedy interviewed ex-slaves, Greek sponge divers, and Riviera Conchs, publishing many of these vignettes in his 1942 book, Palmetto Country.

But while the state’s writers dwelled on the recent, colorful past, few others shed tears for the vanishing world of Cracker Florida. The 1940 U.S. Census documents the transformations gripping the state. The depression decade of the 1930s had slowed down Florida’s growth rate; still, the state grew by 429,203 persons and boasted a population of 1,897,414 residents. Twenty-seven percent of Florida’s residents were black, the lowest percentage in state history. Although parts of North Florida were losing population as agriculture declined, thriving South Florida cities were attractive havens to thousands of displaced farmers from northern Florida and other southern states. Clustered with cities and towns from Pensacola to Key West, Florida had become the South’s most urbanized state by 1940. Almost two out of three Floridians resided in a city; Jacksonville, Miami, and Tampa topped the magical 100,000 plateau.

The 1940 census reinforced what everyone knew but what every North Florida legislator wished to forget: Northern Florida was being dwarfed by growing numbers of urban residents living in central and southern Florida. Nevertheless, North Florida’s most powerful legislators, later called the “Porkchoppers,” stubbornly refused to provide booming southern Florida counties with the roads and schools they desperately needed.

Florida’s population in 1940 included 69,861 foreign-born residents, more than all other southern states except Texas. Immigrants tended to follow the crowds to Florida’s more urbanized Gold Coast or Tampa Bay areas. Residents in the Panhandle’s small towns rarely heard a foreign accent—unless it was a Chicago tourist headed toward Miami.

Photographs of the famed green benches of St. Petersburg or the delicatessens of Miami Beach acknowledge another significant demographic change: Florida was getting older. By 1940, Florida’s median age had climbed to 29, matching the U.S. average, but three years older than the rest of the South. Florida’s aging population was the result of two factors: The state’s birth rate was the lowest in the South, and large numbers of older residents migrated to Florida from northern states.

Many Florida cities contained pockets of black or white rural migrants living in grinding poverty and wretched conditions. The New Deal’s Federal Emergency Relief Administration and Public Works Administration helped some Florida cities install modern sewers and paved roads, but such programs generally assisted more affluent and
politically powerful neighborhoods. Ownership of one’s home, a central tenet of the American dream, was far from universal, and many structures were substandard. In St. Petersburg, two-thirds of black households depended upon kerosene for lighting. Nearly 4,000 structures in Jacksonville lacked running water while another 7,000 went without flush toilets. Migrant workers suffered the most, paying outrageous sums—$4 a week in Belle Glade—for a shack without conveniences. A federal investigator described Belle Glade’s “Negro quarter” as having “no regular streets, just a jumble of alleyways, hodgepodge streets and footpaths, two- and three-story buildings most of which are shed-like, barn-like, ramshackle.” Health care mirrored the housing crisis. A report indicated that 26 of 27 counties in northern and western Florida lacked adequate medical care.

The 1940 census profiled 134,374 adult, wage-earning, black males. Fully one-third still worked the land, although precious few owned the land they worked. Black females faced even more daunting occupational prospects. Of Florida’s 85,464 black female wage earners, two-thirds were employed as maids, laundresses, or service workers. Few blacks were found in the professional ranks. Census takers surveying the state enumerated one black chemist, two veterinarians, three artists/art teachers, seven authors/reporters, nine lawyers, 24 pharmacists, 39 dentists, 45 professors, 85 physicians, and 979 clergymen. Ambitious black Floridians such as poet James Weldon Johnson, activist A. Philip Randolph, blues musician Hudson “Tampa Red” Whitaker, and actor Butterfly McQueen fled to Harlem or Chicago.

Race cut deeply into a separated and very unequal education system. Because the State of Florida supplied little of the cost of local public education, enormous differences existed from county to county or even within counties. A completely segregated system of higher education, under-funded even at white institutions, added further barriers for ambitious black citizens.

White supremacy stood at the very center of Florida’s political economy. No blacks voted in the Democratic white primary or served on a jury. U.S. Senator Claude Pepper, widely perceived as one of the South’s most liberal statesmen, demagogued in January 1938, “Whatever may be placed upon the statute books of the Nation, however many soldiers may be stationed about the ballot boxes of the Southland, the colored race will not vote, because in doing so under the present circumstances they endanger the supremacy of a race to which God has committed the destiny of a continent, perhaps, of a world.”

If the state’s social relations remained regressive and deeply mired in the past, its economy, as measured by the early days of the 1940s, was charting a new course. In 1933, the Depression’s leanest year, Floridians earned a total of $423 million in income. By 1941, income soared to $1.05 billion. “The people of Florida now are eating high on the hog,” proclaimed Governor Fred P. Cone, “Old Suwannee,” a banker from Lake City. Florida’s surge in income left the rest of the South behind. “There are no boll weevils in the tourist crop,” beamed one Floridian.

The chief cause for optimism in America was war in Europe and a growing defense budget at home. Defense contractors, truck farmers, cotton brokers, lumber mills, and resort hotels benefited from Europe’s tragedy. President Roosevelt found ardent support for his foreign policy among southern congressmen. Claude Pepper, reigned as Florida’s senior U.S. senator, dexterously promoting New Deal social spending and military preparedness while working tirelessly to bring home military pork. His counterpart in the U.S. House of Representatives, Robert “He Coon” Sikes, Democrat from Crestview, also proved exceptionally adept at securing military appropriations for hard-scrabble northwest Florida.

Jump-started by New Deal initiatives, Florida was being transformed into a military powerhouse. WPA-constructed air fields became military bases; newly dredged harbors welcomed Navy and Coast Guard vessels. Eglin Army Field encompassed 24 square miles of swamp and forest, while St. Petersburg hosted the Coast Guard at its Bayboro Harbor facility. A Clay County summer camp for Florida’s National Guard became Camp Blanding. Home to 90,000 staff members and trainees, Camp Blanding ranked as the fourth-largest city in the state. Florida’s climate and terrain provided ideal conditions for training thousands of urgently needed pilots. Flight schools, encouraged by General Hap Arnold, commander of the U.S. Army Air Corps, soon dotted the state...

On the morning of Dec. 7, 1941, few Floridians had heard of Pearl Harbor; by Sunday afternoon, Pearl Harbor signified both place and purpose. Across Florida, the terrible news was relayed across fences, over loud speakers and telephones, on the radio and in movie theaters. Floridians rushed to their atlases to locate far-away Pearl Harbor, and anxious soldiers, sailors, and airmen reported to their bases for duty. For military men or civilians, blacks, Hispanics, or Anglos, rich or poor, young or old, life in the Sunshine State would never be the same.

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Disney uses ex-spymasters to buy soggy crossroads area for his mysterious grand plan

By Richard Foglesong

As the plane circled south of Orlando, Walt looked down, saw the confluence of Interstate 4, then under construction, and Florida's Turnpike and exclaimed: "That's it!" What sold Disney were the roads crisscrossing beneath him, which were needed to import tourists from afar to make his business plan work. Florida had fewer residents than the Los Angeles region surrounding Disneyland, yet Walt and his executives envisioned a giant pleasure palace 10 times the size of Disneyland. It would not be a Florida theme park so much as an East Coast tourist spa located in Florida.

If Walt practiced gut decision-making, his brother Roy and others on the Project Winter team were more methodical. Returning from the Florida flyover, they commissioned a "Central Florida Study" to compare Orlando and Ocala as potential theme park sites, dispatching William Lund to Florida from Economic Research Associates, the Disney site consultant.

Wanting complete secrecy to avoid triggering a real estate price run-up, they contacted the company's New York counsel, William Donovan, of the firm Donovan, Leisure, Newton, and Irvine. He was the same "Wild Bill" Donovan who directed the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the predecessor of the CIA, during World War II. Donovan procured a business card, letterhead stationery, and a phone number identifying Lund as a member of the Burke & Burke law firm, located one floor beneath Donovan and Leisure at One Wall Street in New York.

On Dec. 10, 1963, a salesman from Florida Ranch Lands, Inc. (FRL), an Orlando real estate agency, showed Lund three large land parcels southwest of the city. Lund also visited Ocala, but concluded the Orlando area was preferable because it was faster growing and had better access to highways and airport. Accepting Lund's recommendation, Disney dispatched general counsel Robert Foster to assemble land for the project.

Secrecy now became imperative, so Foster returned to ex-spymaster Donovan, who directed him to Paul Helliwell, Miami lawyer, former OSS associate and money launderer for the Bay of Pigs invasion. Helliwell in turn recruited the services of Roy Hawkins, a trusted veteran Miami real estate man who had developed much of Biscayne Boulevard for the Phipps family.

In short order, Project Winter operatives acquired an option on the 12,440-acre Demetree property and on a 9,000-acre tract in Osceola owned by State Sen. Irlo Bronson. They wanted land in both Orange and Osceola to preserve their future options, according to Foster, who was following Walt's dictum: "Whenever you deal with government, always deal with two."

The Demetree property posed a problem because of its many "outs"—individually owned parcels within the larger tract. The land, much of it soggy with water, had been subdivided in 1912 and sold by catalogue to persons across the country, complicating the task of land assembly.

The Project Winter team used dummy corporations with odd names like AyeFour Corporation, to make the purchases, which led to media speculation through spring and summer of 1965.

In mid-October 1965, the Orlando Sentinel identified Disney as the mystery land buyer. Improbably, the Project Winter team members had maintained secrecy for 18 months while they assembled a 43-square-mile parcel for which they paid less than $200 an acre.

Orlando real estate agency FRL later sued both Walt Disney Productions and Economic Research Associates, claiming FRL was denied its 10 percent commission on property sales (an estimated $242,000). On the day before trial, the Disney company settled for what FRL's Nelson Boice termed a "significant amount." A stipulation prevents either side from revealing the exact figure.

Richard Foglesong, a professor of politics at Rollins College, is author of Married to the Mouse: Walt Disney World and Orlando. His research was supported by a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities.
Florida, the land of possibility, becomes whatever dreamers envision

Florida scholar Raymond Arsenault asks the question: Is there such a thing as a Florida dream? If so, is it a scaled-down version of the American dream—or something else altogether? Here is what he concludes:

By Raymond Arsenault

It may be necessary to talk instead of a Florida dreamscape—a cultural backdrop capable of inspiring a wide variety of dreamlike images and expectations. Florida, as “a state of mind,” is larger than any single cultural dream or aspiration, and the evolving sense of place that has sustained its inhabitants’ hopeful visions cannot be reduced to a simple slogan or aphorism.

Historically, the Florida dreamscape has served as a repository for all manner of myths and images. In the 19th century, when agricultural visions were the order of the day, the dominant dream focused on cheap land and a 10-month growing season. But in the present century, as consumption has replaced production as the center of human striving, the dreamscape has moved to the city, the tourist camp, and the theme park.

To some modern Floridians, the Florida dream represents the prospect of living (and perhaps even working) in a relatively beneficent climate; to others, it is the expectation of a long and prosperous retirement, of proper reward for a lifetime of labor in the real world. To the millions of tourists who visit the state, it is a week or two of blissful sunbathing on a sandy beach, a breathless tour of Disney World and Busch Gardens, or perhaps the joy of sitting in the grandstand under a high, blue sky on the first day of spring training. To the hundreds of thousands of Caribbean and Central American refugees who have poured into southern Florida, it is the hope that their new home will provide a safe haven from political and economic turmoil.

This brief catalog represents only a fraction of the state’s popular imagery. But even a partial list reveals an essential truth about the Florida dreamscape: Most Florida “dreams” constitute something less than a true Utopian vision. The Florida dreamscape, it seems, has offered relative improvement without promising an absolute paradise. Put simply, no one expects Florida to be perfect but nearly everyone expects it to be better than the “real world” left behind. In the words of a 1980s airline jingle designed to lure winter tourists to the state, “When you’ve got it bad, we’ve got it good.” Despite its many dystopian elements—which historically have ranged from natural menaces such as mosquitoes, hurricanes, and humidity to man-made creations such as strip malls, drive-by shootings, and drug cartels—Florida has always been a place for dreamers looking for something better.

The one thing that most Florida dreamers have in common is the belief that the state is a land apart, a special place where fresh starts and new directions are not only possible but probable.

Promoting and manipulating this belief has become the stock-in-trade of real estate developers and travel agents, but such commercial artifice should not obscure the real basis of Florida’s attractiveness. Long before the first sand merchant opened for business, the perception of Florida as a dreamscape was firmly grounded in the state’s environmental and geographical distinctiveness. Indeed, the pattern was set when the first band of Paleolithic migrants wandered into the peninsula, perhaps as early as 12,000 years ago. Discovering a world beyond their previous experience, a glacierless land of faunal and floral excess, they adjusted their cultural forms to match the distinctive environment of their new home.

Climate and location, more than any other factors, have made Florida what it is. As a subtropical appendage of a large temperate landmass, the peninsula literally and figuratively stands apart from the rest of the United States. Yet it is not an island. Jutting outward into the Caribbean basin, it is an anomalous but accessible borderland. As such, it is a place for melding the exotic and the familiar. Florida is the gateway to the Caribbean, but it is not actually in the Caribbean. It is near the tropics, but is not really tropical, culturally or environmentally.

Prior to the emergence of modern technology—air conditioning, pesticides, super highways, air travel, dredging, and the like—the humid and often swampy peninsula languished as an underpopulated and marginalized frontier, one that discouraged all but the hardest of pioneers. In recent decades, however, a technological overlay has unleashed Florida’s potential as an economic powerhouse. For better or worse, the state has become viable for year-round living and an increasingly popular destination for all sorts of individuals and families seeking lives of relative ease and comfort. With a diverse population approaching 14 million, modern technology-Florida has become, in effect, a regional laboratory for cultural hybridization and social and physical experimentation.

The laboratory metaphor seems particularly apt when we consider the attri-
Attitudes toward nature and technology that prevail among the state's inhabitants. Given enough time and technological sophistication, the Florida landscape, we are told, can be anything humans want it to be. The piney woods of east central Florida can become a Walt Disney World; a swampy estuary can be transformed into a neighborhood of tract houses or a golf course; a barrier island can become a complex of towering condominiums and resort hotels. Sooner or later, almost all natural landscapes are subjected to human intervention and transformation, but in Florida the urge to turn first nature into second nature has been pursued with religious zeal.

The unusual breadth and depth of this transformative mentality may have something to do with the fact that many Floridians are actually northern transplants, recent migrants who feel only a shallow attachment to their new home, including its natural aesthetics. More often than not, Florida's...
fate has been entrusted to the sensibilities of the non-native Floridian, who may be drawn to the comforts of a subtropical climate but whose image of an attractive or ideal landscape quite naturally leans more to mountain valleys or rolling hills of evergreens than to pine-clad flatlands and subtropical wetlands. Even the state's most recognized natural asset—its seemingly endless and often breathtaking natural shoreline—has received limited respect from the many individuals and governmental authorities who have felt compelled to “improve” it by constructing seawalls, canals, boat ramps, and other maritime amenities. The irony is inescapable: The Florida dreamscape is compelling, in part, because the Florida landscape is not.

Those who take the time to explore what is left of natural Florida know better, of course; to them the peninsula that stretches from the cold-water springs of the Panhandle to the mangrove-lined estuaries of the Everglades is a unique and wondrous creation that deserves reverence and protection. How long it will remain so is anybody’s guess. But the signs of change are ominous. Today, the dizzying pace of demographic and social transformation shows no sign of slackening. The most common form of Florida dreaming, alas, continues to draw its inspiration from an aggressive, almost obsessive determination to remake Florida into an everyland. It’s a shiny new Florida of theme parks, super highways, and suburban corridors. Dreamland or ecological nightmare? Or something in between?

The question hangs in the balance for future generations to decide.

RAYMOND ARSENAULT is the John Hope Franklin Professor of Southern History at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg.

In move from front porch to TV, local highway to interstate, town to suburb, we lose community

By Joel Embry

Not a soul who bought peanuts or just passed through the small towns of U.S. 90 in North Florida on any Saturday in 1959 knew what Dwight Eisenhower’s highway dreams had in store for their future travels. Not a single inhabitant of any one of those towns would have considered you well if you had told them that a man named Sam Walton from Bentonville, Arkansas, would build the biggest store in town a few years after the U.S. 90 traffic had moved 5 miles out of town to Interstate 10.

In Quincy, nobody would have believed that the soda fountain and the booths of May’s would be taken out. Nobody would have believed that May’s would close after Wal-Mart opened or that Manning Taylor Chevrolet would move out to the edge of town or that the Leaf Theater would close after I-10 made it so easy to go to the show in Tallahassee. Nobody would have believed that the Quincy State Bank would be sold to another bank in Columbus, Georgia, or that the post office would move out to a cow pasture beside Randy’s on the Lake Talquin Road.

At first, I didn’t believe it
when my parents said we were going to live in a new house in Burmah Heights, Quincy's version of a suburb. They said I would love it though. They said it was where everybody was going. It turned out that almost everybody did. Somebody's mother could usually be talked into driving us down to the Leaf for a show. That was better than turning us loose on our bikes for the half hour ride through neighborhoods they weren't sure of. As a matter of fact, they weren't sure about all the folks in Burmah Heights. Not that they were bad; they just didn't know them all. When we did take the bike ride to town, we got the whole story over again about riding at the edge of the street and looking out for cars. There weren't any sidewalks. But that wasn't all bad either. There were woods between Burmah Heights and town, and we had our own trails blazed. If it hadn't been for the woods, we may have never learned to smoke cigarettes.

So, over time, we traded the sidewalk for our mothers' cars. We traded a bike ride to The Square for a car ride to the shopping center. We traded the Leaf for the TV. We traded the front porch for the air conditioner. We traded living around some of everybody for living with people who were just like us. We traded being near our grandparents for being near our parents' friends.

What we lost was the gathering of familiar faces at The Square on Saturday. Somehow, that never happened at the shopping center. We lost time to hang around out on the sidewalk. It seemed as if we were always in the car going somewhere—or watching television. It happened in Quincy just as it happened in Monticello, Live Oak, Marianna, and De Funiak Springs.

Nobody could see it coming. And when it did come, people still were not aware of the pervasive and fundamental change that was taking place in Quincy and every other 19th-century town in America. We had begun the abandonment of the very patterns that had given us the places where our spirits thrived on face-to-face connection with our neighbors. We gave up the ways that had, for generations, sustained us as communities.

JOEL EMBRY is a developer in Fernandina Beach.
Fishing, listening, he learns the wiles of the swamp and ways of the water

By Harry Crews

The Okefenokee Swamp is a blessing, a curse, a stink, and a wild fragrance that heats the blood and lifts the heart. The Okefenokee's black water (black until you hold up a glass to the light and find it pristine, utterly clear) is home to at least 50 varieties of fish. This immense wilderness (666 square miles, some of it very nearly impenetrable) gives refuge to deer, bears, wildcats, otters, raccoons, and alligators. White and golden lilies, cypress and tupelo trees mark the interior of the swamp with splashes of color.

This strange, lovely, and deadly place was where I went as a boy with my Uncle Cooter to help him work his trot lines, run his traps, haul his fishing seines, and cast his nets for crawfish.

Uncle Cooter poled a flat-bottomed boat and was nimble as a cat, even if he did wear a walnut peg where his tight leg was before his daddy shot it off in a hunting accident. His people did not seem very concerned about the accident, saying, every chance they got, that it was an act of God. Act of God or not, a man couldn't plow a mule with a pegleg, but he could turn to the swamp and make a living there.

It was into this swamp that I was first brought when I was 8 years old to work but also-more importantly as it turned out—to listen. In the middle of the day with the boat tied up to a cypress knee, under a canopy of leaves so thick it hid the sky and the sun, I ate my lunch out of a syrup bucket—a lunch almost always consisting of biscuit, grits, and fatback or fried squirrel—and while I ate, I listened to Uncle Cooter tell stories, the same stories given to him by his daddy and his uncles, stories of how strange birds from far places came here to winter in the swamp, stories of how years ago naked and painted Indians, Creeks and Seminoles, had made this swamp their favorite hunting ground. I came to understand early on that my uncle had more stories in him than he had life to tell them. So I listened as hard as a little boy could listen, because I somehow knew that there would never be another chance to learn what I was learning here.

One day, tied up under a black gum tree, my uncle cocked his head and asked, "Where you reckon all this water goes to, son?"

I thought on it a minute and said what seemed obvious: "No wheres."

"No wheres! Is that what you said?"

His eyebrows raised and his eyes opened wide in what even I could tell was mock astonishment. "If it don't go no where, just sets here...(he reached over the shallow draft boat and scooped up a palmful of water)...how come it ain't got no scum? Water ain't running's gone turn bad. Is that right or wrong?"

He knew I knew that was right, so I didn't answer, only sat watching as he reached into the bib of his overall for a can of Prince Albert tobacco and slowly fashioned himself a cigarette. "To the sea, son, to the sea. Ever bit of water you ever seen on land is going—or trying to go—to the sea." He licked his cigarette and fired it up. "And sooner or later, one way or the other, all the water from all the land goes down to the sea. It may have to go up and turn into rain two or three times, and it may have to slake many a righteous thirst of both man and beast, but by and by it will mingle with the sea and become salty before it becomes sweet again."

Novelist Harry Crews' books include a collection of essays and short stories titled Florida Frenzy.
Searching in the scrub for the stately, elusive sandhill crane

In Orange Blossom Trails (John F. Blair, 1977), naturalist Phillip Manning describes a walk through Lake Kissimmee State Park near the border of Polk and Osceola counties.

By Phillip Manning

Beyond the campsites, the trail enters a lovely live-oak hammock. We pass huge oaks, broad and squat and so verdurous with resurrection ferns that their limbs look like fuzzy green logs suspended in space. The shade is dense and only a few rays of sunlight make it to the saw palmetto understory.

Though the hammock is spectacular, it is small, and the trail soon breaks out into more open country. Tiger Lake is visible through a veil of trees. Then the trees drop away.

The jay we are watching finishes its berries and flies off. Suddenly, the scrub seems a dreary place. We move along slowly. Lake Kissimmee is a great park for birders, and I'm hoping to see one other bird here. The Kissimmee prairie is known for its sandhill cranes.

I've only seen sandhill cranes once before in Florida. Two stately gray birds—specks, actually—were grazing a prairie in the Everglades. Although I was several hundred yards from them, they flew as soon as they saw me. Later, I discovered that this skittishness is normal for sandhill cranes. Even Audubon had trouble getting close to them, as he noted in his writings:

The wariness of this species is so remarkable that it takes all the cunning and care of an Indian hunter to approach it at times, especially in the case of an old bird. The acuteness of their sight and hearing is quite wonderful. If they perceive a man approaching, even at the distance of a quarter of a mile, they are sure to take wing.

No one is ever going to confuse my stealth with that of an Indian hunter, but I figure that the relative abundance of these birds on the Kissimmee prairie might give me chance to get within binocular range of them. So we poke along through the scrub, eyes peeled for cranes.

On the way out, we stop at the park entrance to say good-bye to George Aycrigg, the assistant park manager. I tell him about the wildlife we've seen—and the cranes we missed.

"Cranes?" he asks. "You want to see cranes? Come with me."

He leads us to the front of the entrance station. Two sandhill cranes are feeding in the grass. They are spectacular birds, nearly four feet tall, with red topknots, gray bodies, and long legs. I walk to within six feet of one. The bird that Audubon considered one of the wariest creatures in North America ignores me.

PHILLIP MANNING is the author of Orange Blossom Trails and Islands of Hope. He lives in Chapel Hill North Carolina.

Lake Kissimmee is a great park for birders, and I'm hoping to see one other bird here. The Kissimmee prairie is known for its sandhill cranes.
Early cultures evolve with Florida's climate, from Ice Age nomads to waterfront settlers

By Jerald T. Milanich

The first settlers of this region—the Paleoindians of 13,000 years ago—found a much different place than the Florida we know today. Sea levels were significantly lower because so much water was tied up in Ice Age glaciers. For this reason, the peninsula was nearly twice its present width. The Gulf of Mexico shoreline, for example, was more than 100 miles west of its present location.

Florida was also drier than today. Many of our present rivers, springs, and lakes were not here, and even groundwater levels were significantly lower.

The Paleoindians were nomadic. They sought animals to hunt. They also searched for water, which they found in deep springs, like Warm Mineral Spring in Sarasota County, or at watering holes or shallow lakes or prairies where limestone strata near the ground surface provided catchment basins. Such limestone deposits are found from the Hillsborough River north through peninsular Florida into the Panhandle. Most Paleoindian sites are located in this region, although sites have been found as far south as Dade County.

After 9000 B.C., as glaciers melted and sea levels rose, Florida's climate generally became wetter than it had been, providing more water sources around which the Paleoindians could camp. These new conditions may have influenced the later Paleoindians to practice a less-nomadic lifestyle and to occupy camps for longer periods of time.

Paleoindian tools evolved as the people adjusted to changing environmental and social conditions. A wider variety of stone tools came into use, and many of the stone points originally employed to hunt large animals were no longer made. By 7500 B.C., these changes were sufficiently widespread to delineate a new culture; archaeologists today refer to it as the Early Archaic, of which the Windover people were a part.

After 5000 B.C. the climate of Florida began to change into more modern conditions, which were reached about 3000 B.C. The period between 5000 and 3000 B.C. is known as the Middle Archaic.

Middle Archaic sites are found in a variety of settings, some very different from those of Paleoindians and Early Archaic periods. For the first time, sites appeared along the St. Johns River and the Atlantic Coastal strand. Middle Archaic peoples were also living in the Hillsborough River drainage northeast of Tampa Bay, along the southwest Florida coast, in a few southern Florida locales, and at numerous sites in the northern Florida interior.

It is clear that populations were significantly larger than in earlier times and that a more settled lifestyle existed. The Middle Archaic peoples also used a larger variety of specialized tools than their ancestors.

By about 3000 B.C., the onset of the Late Archaic period, essentially modern environmental conditions existed in Florida; expanding populations would soon occupy almost every part of the state. Wetland locales were heavily settled. Numerous Late Archaic sites are in southwest and northeast Florida and in the St. Johns River drainage, where sites are typified by extensive deposits of mollusk shells, the remains of thousands of pre-Columbian meals. Archai
TIMUCUA INDIANS PREPARE A FEAST (BELOW) AND AN EARLY TEMPLE URN (LEFT).

populations probably lived all along the coast, but many sites have been inundated by rising seas, which continued throughout the Archaic period.

Slightly before 2000 B.C., the Late Archaic villagers learned to make fired pottery, tempering it with Spanish moss and palmetto fibers. By the end of the Late Archaic period, 500 B.C., distinctive regional styles of pottery had emerged, a phenomenon that allows archaeologists to define and study specific cultures. (In many instances we can trace, albeit incompletely, the histories of these cultures from that time to the colonial period when their societies were first described by Europeans.)

JERALD T. MILANICH is curator of archaeology at the Florida Museum of Natural History.

By about 3000 B.C., the onset of the Late Archaic period, essentially modern environmental conditions existed in Florida; expanding populations would soon occupy almost every part of the state.

Europeans arrive, bringing missions, diseases, slaves, ambition, and war

By Catherine Puckett

Florida's first European explorers found villages of the Timucuan Indians near the Suwannee River and its tributaries. Timucuan culture began to take shape after 700 A.D., when Florida's earliest peoples developed agriculture-based economies. They grew maize, beans, and squash, and created complex religious and political systems.

The Timucuans were a visually impressive people. The adults stood well over 6 feet tall and adorned themselves with tattoos and bits of fur draped here and there. The men wore their hair in high topknots. The women dressed in Spanish moss skirts and left their hair long and unbound.

Spaniard Hernando de Soto encountered the Timucuans when he led his expedition through Florida and the Southeast in 1539–40. Reaching the Santa Fe River, his men named it the River of Discord, reflecting the troubles that had beset them so far. The Suwannee, however, they called the River of Deer, because it was there that Timucuans brought the army venison as a sign of friendship.
In the village of Napituca, near Live Oak, de Soto battled with Timucuans; his mounted horsemen, armed with lances and crossbows, killed 40 Indians and captured 300.

In the early 17th century, the Spanish established a series of missions in Florida, including ones on the Suwannee, Santa Fe, and Ichetucknee rivers.

The missions were short lived, however. They were destroyed by European-introduced disease, along with slaving raids by English colonists from the Carolinas. At Santa Catalina de Afuerica, on the Ichetucknee River, Captain Francisco de Fuentes, with five Spanish soldiers and 40 Christian Indians, unsuccessfully tried in 1685 to defend the mission against a force of 300 English. By 1710, the missions were gone and the native population of North Florida had been decimated.

Creek Indians, later called Seminoles, started moving into Florida and the Suwannee basin around the 1740s. In 1773, the explorer-naturalist William Bartram stayed at an Indian village near Manatee Springs on the lower Suwannee River. He wrote:

The town is delightfully situated on the elevated east banks of the river, the ground level to near the river, when it descends suddenly to the water... There are near 30 habitations... These Indians have large handsome canoes, which they form out the trunks of Cypress trees, some of them commodious enough to accommodate 20 or 30 warriors. In these large canoes they descend the river on trading and hunting expeditions to the sea coast, neighboring islands, and keys, quite to the point of Florida, and sometimes cross the gulf, extending their navigations to the Bahama islands and even to Cuba.

By the turn of the century, Indian relations with the whites were deteriorating. Slave owners in the newly formed United States believed escaped slaves were living in Seminole villages in then-Spanish Florida. General Andrew Jackson in 1817 led American soldiers into Florida to recover slaves. Jackson and his army destroyed Indian towns, captured slaves, took cattle, and defeated a group of escaped slaves and their Indian allies at Suwannee Old Town, near Cross City. The next year, Jackson again forayed into the Suwannee region, attacking Billy Bowlegs' Seminole village above White Springs. This time, however, Jackson was foiled. Bowlegs, supposedly warned of the impending attack by the son of a Scottish trader named Arbuthnot, disappeared into the Okefenokee Swamp. Jackson blamed Arbuthnot and hanged him.

CATHARINE PUCKETT, a Gainesville native, studied the natural and folk history of the Suwannee region for many years.

NINETEENTH-CENTURY ARTIST'S DEPICTION OF AMERICAN TROOPS ATTACKING SEMINOLES IN FLORIDA.
Some enchanted, some not, writers depict brilliant, ragtag Florida

By Casey Blanton

Roughly every 100 years, Florida is reinvented on the pages of the travel books that bring people to this state. Almost from the beginning, early explorers were not immune to myth making. What better way to encourage more money from financial backers in Europe than to name a barren stretch of palmetto and sand La Florida, then promise gold and a fountain of youth? Florida as fantasyland—complete with wild promises of health, wealth, and exotic lushness—is a theme that persists throughout the history of travel writing in Florida.

Fantasy was not unusual during the heyday of exploration in the 16th and 17th centuries. Maps and drawings of Florida include mountains in the background and comely, European-looking natives strolling through a verdant landscape. Hardy explorers like Cabeza de Vaca and Hernando de Soto, clanking around in hot, chafing armor, complained about unyielding palmettos and uncooperative Indians but still sent home glowing tales of Florida's riches they might yet find.

A century later, in 1773, under the warm sun of a late Florida spring, botanist William Bartram set out to explore the St. Johns River, Florida's earliest thruway. Bartram's book about his collecting expedition, called The Travels of William Bartram, describes an Edenic Florida. In a famous passage describing Blue Springs, near DeLand, Bartram is struck by the strange beauty of "the enchanting and amazing crystal fountain." The "cerulean" water is "absolutely diaphanous... transparent as ether."

Travel writers who followed Bartram were less sanguine about Florida's natural attractions. James John Audubon, for one, was disenchanted with the Florida he visited. In 1831 he wrote to his wife, "I am now truly speaking in a wild and desolate part of the world—no one in the eastern United States has any true idea of this peninsula. My account of what I have [seen] or shall see of the Floridas will be far, very far from corroborating the flowery sayings of Mr. Bartram, the botanist."

Audubon is the kind of traveler that Harriet Beecher Stowe must have had in mind when she said in her book on Florida, "it is not to be doubted that fully half of the tourists and travelers who come to Florida return intensely disappointed and even disgusted." Her book on Florida, Palmetto Leaves, published in 1873, 100 years after Bartram's
account of exactly the same landscape, is a partial corrective to the botanist’s romantic hyperbole and a warning to overly idealistic travelers like Audubon who expect too much from Florida. Her account, although clearly favorable to Florida, attempts to reconcile the two very different Floridas presented by the famous naturalists. “Florida, like a piece of embroidery, has two sides to it—one side all tag-rag and thrum, without order or position, and the other side showing flowers and arabesques and brilliant coloring. Both these sides exist.” She bluntly continues, “We caution everyone coming to Florida, don’t hope for too much.”

One of the best early 20th-century travel books is the 1939 Works Progress Administration Guide to Florida written and compiled as part of the Depression era’s Federal Writer’s Project. In Florida, the WPA Guide employed Zora Neale Hurston, Stetson Kennedy, and other less well-known out-of-work writers. Their scrupulous research and considerable writing talent resulted in over 500 pages of the most detailed and honest guidebook to Florida ever written...

A description of the same landscape we have seen earlier in Bartram, Audubon, and Stowe—the region just south of Jacksonville—shows how much the state had, by the 1930s, both changed and remained the same: “Cabbage palms grow thickly along rivers and creeks...Thistles, ferns, and blue flag flourish in the roadside ditches...Along the highways, all but lost among blatant neon lights flashing ‘Whiskey’ and ‘Dance and Dine,’ are crudely daubed warnings erected by itinerant evangelists, announcing that ‘Jesus is soon coming,’ or exhorting the traveler to ‘Prepare to meet thy God.’”

CASEY BLANTON is associate professor of English at Daytona Beach Community College and author Travel Writing: The Self and the World.

How all things yearn to be restored from the disasters of stillness, yearn to leave themselves: the concrete U’s of benches tossed leaf-like by August weather, the stammered urgencies of headlines caught in their journey to trash, snared on the pruned branches of the gardener’s obedient shrubs.

How the buildings mock the roughness of what was once fluid sand and virgin stone and celebrate, “Here, among our geometries, lie the destinies of shell and rock, lumber and desire, for there is no rest without the hand-mode shadow, the roof that says to us, ‘This is your space—you who never knew what it was to live simply among the gifts and lights.”

How all things began to remind. The dragonfly pinning itself to the air’s lapel, its wings haloed by velocity, is somewhat like the green parrots in the perfect rectangle of the branch-strewn plaza behind us, in turn evoking the order of trailing students strange in their re-mappings of the familiar and thinking, What should I notice to excel? and so miss the point, much as I have, failing again to see how little kinship I’ve endured for others’ wounds, how the easy noble thing the storm inspired was to compare its passing ravages with history and say ‘But over there is my island torn by decades of tyranny, and what could it matter that this suburb bleed when that notion drowns?’ Except that this freshly pierced shell has become less exile than home.

Close. Closer still. Even as my back is turned. My eyes slide up the careful walls minutely, the hourglass sand of new love. Ricardo Pau-Llosa

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Wrapped in Rainbows:
The Life of Zora Neale Hurston
By Valerie Boyd

Reviewed by Phyllis McEwen

Valerie Boyd has created a vehicle for readers to take the complex and exciting journey through Zora Neale Hurston's 69 years of life. Wrapped in Rainbows offers a satisfying excursion, putting to rest a lot of foolishness that may have distracted scholars and others from the sheer brilliance of Hurston's achievements. An African-American female journalist based in Atlanta, Boyd writes in a womanist voice, with the strong, informed subtext of the African Diaspora. Though she relies heavily on Hurston's controversial autobiography, Dust Tracks on a Road, and other Hurston writings, she also works deftly with the correspondence from Hurston and others. She's done her legwork too, traveling in Hurston's path, quite literally, lucky as a biographer to find people who actually knew the writer. Boyd weaves it all together with precision and grace. She has produced a biography that fills in missing information and yet does not violate the true nature of her subject; Hurston valued and cultivated her privacy, and for good reason. There is no salacious, titillating tone to this story, no peaking behind closed doors. Somehow Boyd has left this stylish, brilliant personality and her enigmatic persona intact and healthy, while satisfying the most curious reader. As Alice Walker has written of Boyd's work, Hurston would probably say, "My name is in my daughter's hands."

For those who have already read anything they can get their hands on about Hurston, there is quite a bit of repetition especially as the tale begins; it quotes from Hurston's writing at length. But she also fills in places with her knowledge and respect for womanist traditions paired with her keen intuition and journalistic investigative skills.

Boyd is not the first African-American woman to write a biography of Hurston; Lillie P. Howard published a less-comprehensive study of Hurston in 1980. In 1977, Robert E. Hemenway wrote a literary biography of Hurston that remains an invaluable addition to Zora lore. Hemenway stated in the introduction to his work that Hurston deserves intense study. "I have tried to demonstrate why this is so, not in the interests of producing a 'definitive' book. That book remains to be written, and by a black woman..."

Perhaps, that is what we have here in the area of biography.

It is especially interesting to read about Hurston through comments made by Toni Morrison, June Jordan, Deborah G. Plant, Alice Walker, Angela Davis, and other writers, players in the continuum of which Hurston is certainly a major part. Using these literary and philosophical frames, Boyd weaves a detailed and informed picture of Hurston as we have never before seen.

Boyd depicts Hurston as a tragic figure, analyzing her life in the framework of the racism and misogyny of her time. Her discussion of writers' life cycles takes Hurston out of the isolation of being an aging artist, and looks at the reality of the writing life. Her frank discussion of William Faulkner, Ralph Ellison, Ernest Hemingway, and others totally blows away the often-heard analyses about the last period of Hurston's life. Boyd does serious damage to that sexist, ingratiating, and insulting moral to the story that had often followed discussions of Hurston, not unlike the terrible folk adage, "Whistlin' girls and crowin' hens always come to some bad ends."

And finally, Boyd lets everybody know that the widely circulated photograph of the smiling woman in the straw hat is not Zora Neale Hurston. Boyd sets the record straight, surely a relief to Zora lovers who had looked deeply into the eyes of Hurston's other portraits and knew that the woman in the straw hat was not the same woman.

This is an important biography of Hurston, crisp and poetic with Boyd's savvy tone and sophisticated humor. When she speculates on what Hurston's life would have been like if she'd stayed with her first husband, Boyd quips: "Or perhaps she would have written seven great books and kept them in a trunk at the foot of her bed, to be discovered by some fresh-faced Ph.D. candidate in 2042."

Zora Neale Hurston's life and work warrant many more written examinations from writers in academia, journalism, anthropology, and other areas. Boyd has set the bar at a new height that others must continue to raise.

Phyllis McEwen is a poet, librarian, and scholar-actor who has toured throughout Florida since 1991 portraying Zora Neale Hurston as part of FHC's Chautauqua series.

Freedom in the Family: A Mother-Daughter Memoir of the Fight for Civil Rights
By Tananarive Due and Patricia Stephens Due
389 pages. One World, Ballantine Books $24.95

Reviewed by Raymond Arsenault

Patricia Stephens Due is an African-American activist who has devoted most of her life to what she and others call "the move..."
ment." Her daughter, Tananarive Due, a former features writer for the Miami Herald, is an award-winning novelist. Together, they have written a dual memoir that, in a series of alternating chapters, offers a revealing look at their personal and familial experiences. But this remarkable book is much more than an autobiographical tale of two women. It is also the story of modern Florida's long and difficult struggle to break free from the shackles of racial prejudice and injustice. This is not a well-known story despite the recent publication of several important books on the subject—most notably Glenda Rabby's The Pain and the Promise: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Tallahassee, Florida (1999); Ben Green's Before His Time: The Untold Story of Harry T. Moore, America's First Civil Rights Martyr (1999); and Robert W. Saunders, Jr.'s Bridging the Gap: Continuing the Florida NAACP Legacy of Harry T. Moore, 1952-1966 (2000).

Much of the civil rights saga related in Freedom in the Family has never before appeared in print. From the late 1940s onward, a small but dedicated group of activists labored in the shadows of the Sunshine State, working for social justice and against Jim Crow, and taking risks that often endangered themselves and their families. The Dues pick up the story in the late 1950s, when young Pat Stephens and her older sister Priscilla were student activists at Florida A&M University, tracing the ups and downs of the movement during the turbulent years of the 1960s and the long denouement of more recent decades. Along the way they introduce an extraordinary cast of characters, men and women who put their bodies on the line in a courageous, sustained, and sometimes desperate effort to awaken their fellow Floridians to the injustice of racial segregation and discrimination.

As the state field director for the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and later as an NAACP-affiliated activist, Patricia Stephens Due was always close to the cutting edge of the struggle. Her numerous activities on behalf of social change took her all across the state, from Miami to the Panhandle, bringing her into contact with a wide variety of activists. One such activist was a young black attorney named John Due, whom she married in 1963. Drawn together by both love and politics, the Dues constituted a formidable husband-and-wife team that bridged the legal and direct-action wings of the movement. Sometimes physically separated by the demands of the struggle, they were never very far apart in their sense of what needed to be done, even if considerable personal and familial sacrifice were involved. Their common cause stretched from the desegregation of public accommodations and schools to voting rights and economic empowerment, and fortunately they were not alone in their willingness to place the
movement at the center of their lives.

Among these largely unsung heroes was Calvin Bess, a brilliant student activist from Tallahassee who did not live long enough to accept a graduate fellowship at Harvard. In 1967, at the age of 22, he died in Mississippi under mysterious circumstances while working as a voting rights advocate for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Another was Dr. Robert Hayling, a black St. Augustine dentist who was nearly beaten to death by Klansmen in 1963 when he protested a Klan rally celebrating the bombing of a black Baptist church in Birmingham, an act of terror that took the lives of four little girls. Still another was Judy Benninger, a fearless white activist and feminist leader from Gainesville who participated in numerous CORE demonstrations and went to jail for her beliefs. And there was Pearlie Williams, a 109-year-old ex-slave who unexpectedly showed up at the Gadsden County Courthouse during a 1964 voter registration drive, declaring to Pat Due and anyone else who would listen: “I was born a slave. It’s about time I registered to vote.” With Due’s help, she got her wish.

As these stories suggest, no brief review can do justice to this rich compendium of movement culture. A successful blend of history and memory, Freedom in the Family is a unique creation that reconstructs the lives of an influential but largely unappreciated group of Floridians. Though they thought of themselves as ordinary people, they set out to do extraordinary things, and for the most part, despite considerable resistance, they succeeded. In the closing paragraph of the book, Pat Due reminds us that biography is the root of all history, that, as she puts it, “History happens one person at a time.” She is right, of course, and the wisdom of her words can be found on virtually every page of this truth-telling volume.

RAYMOND ARSENAULT is the John Hope Franklin Professor of Southern History at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg.
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