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## Book Review: Authentic New Orleans: Tourism, Culture, and Race in the Big Easy

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as leisure, sport, or fun. Texans have never been confused with Puritans, and very few people would characterize Texans as dour, but the Texas image has very seldom included a portrayal of the Lone Star State as a haven for leisure and recreation. David G. McComb, in *Spare Time in Texas: Recreation and History in the Lone Star State*, tackles this task very ably. With lively prose, colorful anecdotes, and a compelling format, McComb paints a vivid portrait of how Texans have played, recreated, and filled their spare time with more than the tending of bawling cattle, the cultivation of meager crops, and the conclusion of mega oil deals. And they did so in ways that met their oversized image and, yes, ego.

McComb arranges the book topically, with subjects that range from prostitution, gambling, and drink to libraries, theaters, and public parks. Perhaps the most forceful chapter deals with Texans' obsession with organized sports and the arenas and fields in which they compete. His narrative "The Great Stadiums" actually begins with the Roman Colosseum, as the foundational model of all stadia that followed, and ends with the colossal spectacle that is Reliant Stadium in Houston. One wonders how McComb would treat the new Dallas Cowboys Stadium in Arlington—and also what the Romans would think about such a structure.

*Spare Time in Texas* is good history, with sound research, well-written and interpreted accounts, and a solid thesis and conclusion. But it is more than that—it is also a joy to read. For many readers it will instill a sense of nostalgia and satisfy their curiosity about how Texans spent their leisure hours in the past. The included well-reproduced archival photos and vignettes of historical characters highlight all the textures of Texans at play—be it gambling in 1880s drinking halls, enjoying the water at the plethora of swimming holes in the state, or crowding into the Cotton Bowl to see Doak Walker prance down the field for another touchdown. *Spare Time in Texas* would make a fine addendum to a Texas history reading list, and it is another addition to the growing literature that depicts Texans outside their common (and often misinterpreted) stereotypes. Put this one in your library.

Stephen F. Austin State University

M. SCOTT SOSEBEE

*Authentic New Orleans: Tourism, Culture, and Race in the Big Easy.* By Kevin Fox Gotham. (New York and London: New York University Press, c. 2007. Pp. [xiv], 281. Paper, \$23.00, ISBN 978-0-8147-3186-4; cloth, \$70.00, ISBN 978-0-8147-3185-7.)

Kevin Fox Gotham's *Authentic New Orleans: Tourism, Culture, and Race in the Big Easy* examines from a sociological perspective the rise of tourism and its connection to conflicts involving race, culture, and authenticity in New Orleans since the mid-nineteenth century. Noting that scholars, journalists, and other observers have predicted that the post-Hurricane Katrina city either will become a Pompeii or Disneyland or will experience a new cultural efflorescence, Gotham proceeds to construct a more nuanced historical and sociological argument that questions simplistic assumptions about New Orleans's future. His book illuminates the transformation of Carnival and the French Quarter as components of the city's tourist image and the role of two world's expositions

a century apart in remolding the city. The book also distinguishes between what he calls "tourism from above" and "tourism from below" and identifies the actors that represent these dichotomous categories (p. 7). *Authentic New Orleans* adds to two previous histories of New Orleans tourism—Anthony J. Stanonis's *Creating the Big Easy: New Orleans and the Emergence of Modern Tourism, 1918–1945* (Athens, Ga., 2006) and my *New Orleans on Parade: Tourism and the Transformation of the Crescent City* (Baton Rouge, 2006)—by more broadly framing their focuses on the interwar and postwar periods, respectively, and by offering a more empirical examination of the relationships between the tourism industry and the people of New Orleans.

Historians will find some aspects of *Authentic New Orleans* problematic. While Gotham had to make choices about how extensively to treat various aspects of his subject (offering little or no commentary on jazz music, Creole cuisine, Mardi Gras Indians, or gay tourism), some readers will be frustrated by his tendency to introduce some topics without analyzing them thoroughly: for instance, the desegregation of public accommodations and the intricacies of mid-twentieth-century clashes over the place of tourism. At times Gotham's periodization does not match his analysis. He states that Carnival organizations began tailoring parades for tourists "in the 1860s and later" (p. 37) and that new alliances and strategies to promote Carnival to tourists appeared in "the second decade of the twentieth century" (p. 90); however, his earliest examples are, respectively, the formation of the Krewe of Rex in 1872 and of the Convention and Visitors Bureau's Committee on Carnival Visitors Ball in 1930, which produced no results until later in the 1930s (the twentieth century's fourth decade). Gotham's heavy reliance on secondary sources and newspapers for much of the book also neglects much of the rich material available in a number of New Orleans repositories.

On a more positive note, Gotham succeeds most clearly in offering a fresh interpretation of the 1884 World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition and in capturing the complexity of New Orleanians' attitudes about "authenticity" at different moments in the city's history. He also offers a compelling analysis enlivened with colorful details, especially for the mid- to late nineteenth century and the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. His work deserves historians' attention for emphatically rejecting one-dimensional, theory-driven analyses that fail to capture the diversity of human agency.

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J. MARK SOUTHER

*The Fall of a Black Army Officer: Racism and the Myth of Henry O. Flipper.* By Charles M. Robinson III. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, c. 2008. Pp. xviii, 197. \$29.95, ISBN 978-0-8061-3521-2.)

Charles M. Robinson III has convincingly set Second Lieutenant Henry Ossian Flipper's military record in its historical context and argues that his court-martial was fair. In 1877 Flipper was the first African American to graduate from West Point. In 1881 court-martial proceedings that lasted thirty days over a three-month period produced a 606-page transcript. The court-martial board found Flipper not guilty of embezzlement but guilty on all counts of conduct unbecoming an officer. He was dismissed from the service, not dishonorably

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