North Carolina Books

Alice R. Cotten, Compiler

Compiler's Note: *This is my last column as book review editor of* North Carolina Libraries. *It has been immensely satisfying to me, but after five years it's time to step aside. My successor will be my colleague Robert G. Anthony, Jr., Collection Development Librarian in the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Thanks to all reviewers, readers, and critics of this column over the years; you've made the work worthwhile.*

Fred Chappell. ***The Fred Chappell Reader.*** Introduction by Dabney Stuart. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987. 491 pp. $22.95. ISBN 0-312-00012-X.

Despite his assertion that he is "no figure of literary 'importance,'" Fred Chappell's place as one of North Carolina's (and the South's) foremost writers is assured. Winner, with John Ashbery, of the 1985 Bollingen Prize for Poetry, Chappell teaches at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. ***The Fred Chappell Reader*** is a carefully chosen collection of short stories, poems, and excerpts from Chappell's novels. Also included are the short novel *Dagon* and the autobiographical essay "A Pact with Faustus."

Chappell's native western North Carolina is the setting for much of his work. The harshness of rural mountain life in the 1930s and '40s permeates the four novels excerpted for the ***Reader***: *It Is Time, Lord; The Inkling; The Gaudy Place;* and *I Am One of You Forever.* The latter, Chappell's most recent novel, is a coming-of-age story, peopled with extraordinary relatives like the narrator's Uncle Zeno. A prodigious storyteller, Zeno, it seemed, "did not merely describe the world," but "used it up." Then there's Uncle Runkin, who sleeps nightly in his fantastically carved coffin "like a single pearl in a jewel case." In the selection from *The Gaudy Place,* readers will recognize Asheville as the youthful Arky hustles his way around the seedy streets of "Braceboro."

Intense and horrific, the novel *Dagon* describes a Methodist minister's gradual surrender to evil. Intricately woven with complex imagery, *Dagon* exemplifies Chappell's ability to incorporate complicated allusions into his work without allowing them to overwhelm the uninitiated reader. Thus, those unfamiliar with Dagon, pagan deity, will nevertheless be absorbed by the fall of pastor Peter Leland.

Of the eight short stories included in the collection, four involve historical figures, and one, the previously uncollected "Notes Toward a Theory of Flight," is told from the perspective of a house cat named Drummond. Whether Chappell chooses to write about a cat, Mrs. Benjamin Franklin, Blackbeard, Franz Joseph Haydn, or itinerant bluesman Stovebolt Johnson, he does it like no one else.

The third section of the ***Reader*** includes poetry culled from four of Chappell's books: *The World Between the Eyes, Midquest, Castle Tzingal* and *Source.* The subjects of Chappell's poems are as varied as those of his stories. He writes of family ("My Mother's Hard Row to Hoe"), of nature ("Remembering Wind Mountain at Sunset"), the mundane ("Recovery of Sexual Desire After a Bad Cold"), and the supernatural ("The Homunculus"). All are exceptional. Many of Chappell's lines will linger in the reader's mind long after the book is finished: "Not all the money in this world can wash true-poor/true rich. Fatback just won't change to artichokes."

The Fred Chappell Reader is an important acquisition for North Carolina public and academic libraries. For readers unfamiliar with Chappell's work, it will serve as a long-overdue introduction. For those who've read him, it has new pleasures to offer.

Anna Donnally, Asheville-Buncombe Library System

Randall, John D. ***The Hatterask Incident.*** Winston-Salem, N.C.: John Blair, 1987. 366 pp. $16.95. ISBN 0-89587-052-5.

This first novel is one of those stories you can't put down until you find out what happens.

The author uses a very possible, contemporary situation. A fishing trawler trying to get

through Oregon Inlet at low tide runs aground on a sandbar. The surrounding community becomes involved—the Army Corps of Engineers, the Coast Guard, park rangers, environmentalists, fishermen, lawyers, reporters, tourists, old families. Trouble starts when the Corps decides that the stranded trawler is a menace to navigation and prepares to blow it up with dynamite. Naturally their decision rouses anger, opposition, and sympathy for the fisherman, whose boat is his livelihood. More trouble comes when Crystal, the terrible hurricane some predict will level coastal development someday, strikes North Carolina.

The author gives the novel a sense of growing urgency by telling the story from the viewpoints of various characters, interspersing their tales with bulletins issued by the National Weather Service. The novel is divided into particular dates, the whole action taking place in one week including the Labor Day holiday. The hurricane and how characters survive it or not comes to dominate the second half of the novel, straying maybe too much from the original story, but connected.

What readers are left with is a better understanding of the complexity of "issues" that appear in our news every day. First we come to sympathize with one character and then with an opponent. The tables turn, and people act just like people, making mistakes one time and performing good deeds the next.

Valid criticisms can be made about the novel—tenses are awkward sometimes, for instance, and after a slow beginning everything happens, from a helicopter crash to a traffic jam on the Wright Memorial Bridge at the height of the hurricane—but still the story captures the reader and helps him, in the end, to understand the nature of real and complicated problems.

The author is a systems analyst for IBM and vacationed on the Outer Banks every summer for some twenty years before writing this story. Between vacations he kept up with coastal events by subscribing to the Manteo newspaper. He retains actual geographical names in the book, but at least thinly disguises personal ones. The novel should be appropriate for many libraries.

Nancy Lee Shires, East Carolina University Library

Bill Moore. ***Two on the Square***. Asheville: Bright Mountain Books, 1986. 208 pp. $14.95. ISBN 0-914875-13-2. Illustrated by Dianne Cable. (138 Springside Road, Asheville, NC 28803).

Bill Moore first created Lonzo and the Pundit, the characters featured in ***Two on the Square***, in his regular Saturday column in the *Asheville Citizen*. The book is made up of reworked and reprinted columns, plus new material on these two chronic ne'er-do-wells. Mr. Moore assures his readers that his two friends are pure fiction, but the type is certainly familiar in American cities, and particularly in public libraries. The Pundit and Lonzo are representatives of the species *Homo derelecticus*. In other words, they're homeless and they like it that way. Like many residents of the North Carolina mountains, they travel to Florida for the winter; but unlike the others, they are just as derelict in the Everglades as they are in the Land-of-the-Sky. Unless, of course, you count a job wrestling an elderly, doped-up alligator every night for a few weeks as gainful employment.

Two on the Square consists of a series of brief episodes in the adventures of Lonzo and the Pundit, divided into sections with titles such as "The Women in their Lives," "Some Civic Lessons," and "Winters in the Sun." The episodes are not necessarily in chronological order; they apparently are meant to be read one at a time rather than as a story. Since this reviewer had to read them all at once, that was my least favorite aspect of the book. The overall effect is somewhat choppy. There are some common threads running through the book, such as the pair's efforts to keep their disreputable vehicle (the Honkerbus) operating; the assortment of T-shirts sported by Lonzo (with messages ranging from "Help Stamp Out Preppies" to "Property of the Harvard Debating Team"); and their relationships with the narrator (Mr. Moore himself) and other notables such as Big Time Benny Biscayne, an operator from Florida who provides them with temporary and sometimes hazardous employment opportunities. In fact, it was these common threads that made it hard *not* to expect a real story line to emerge.

My favorite episode in the book involved a leaking radiator on the Honkerbus, an inexperienced park ranger, and two female tourists from Ohio. The rookie ranger thought he was being clever when he recovered his first aid kit and fire extinguisher from our unscrupulous heroes, but he lost a hose and the antifreeze out of his cruiser. The tourists decided the local color was entirely too bright and moved on.

Two on the Square is an amusing collection, both cynical about and sympathetic to that classic American character, the street bum. It is of special interest to libraries near Asheville whose patrons will appreciate the in-jokes and might already have been following the adventures of

these characters in the newspaper. It's also fun for readers who have never seen Pack Square or attended Belle Chere, Asheville's annual street fair. Lonzo and the Pundit are sufficiently universal to be recognizable in most places, and Bill Moore's wit extends beyond the mountains to mock gently many aspects of American culture.

Elizabeth White, Asheville-Buncombe Library System

Leslie Banner. ***A Passionate Preference. The Story of the North Carolina School of the Arts.*** Winston-Salem: North Carolina School of the Arts Foundation, Inc., 1987. 438 pp. $22.00. (201 Waughtown Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27107.)

The North Carolina School of the Arts should, logically, never have succeeded. North Carolina in 1962 was a rocky field indeed into which then-Governor Terry Sanford cast the seed of his dream: a state-supported school to train musicians, singers, dancers, and actors. This very special place was to yield not high school and college teachers of music, dance, and drama, but artists whose talent would be recognized, tended, and cultivated from the age at which they first expressed "a passionate preference" for one of the arts. Such early nurturing appears essential if a performing artist is to have any hope of achieving national success.

Yet the concept did *not* appear self-evident to members of either the North Carolina legislature or the state's educational system in the early 1960s. Spoken of scathingly in the General Assembly as "the toe-dancin' school" (and, when legislators were reminded of the broader curricular goals, "the toe-dancin' and flute-tutin' school"), the planned conservatory was also blasted by many leaders of the state university system. Particularly adamant in its opposition were the administrators and faculty of the Woman's College (now the University of North Carolina at Greensboro), who perceived Sanford's plan as both an insult and a threat to their music, art, and drama departments. They felt that, if it existed at all, this conservatory should be part of the Woman's College.

The school's difficulties did not end with the passage of the bill pledging state support. Selecting a site, funding the necessary building renovations and new construction, recruiting faculty and students, and establishing international programs all brought formidable challenges. Had Sanford been less idealistic he would have given up before he started. Had he been less politically astute, the school would never have materialized.

Drawing from two major archives—John Ehle's papers from the eighteen-month period he worked for Governor Sanford, and the North Carolina School of the Arts Oral History compiled by Douglas Zinn—Leslie Banner has told the remarkable story of the NCSA's founding and development largely through the words of those who were responsible for the school's genesis. The combination of vividly recounted anecdotes from the oral history and Banner's clear and energetic prose lend ***A Passionate Preference*** a rare sparkle and immediacy. Among the principal characters were Governors Sanford and Dan K. Moore. It was Moore's generous support of the NCSA, despite the fact that it had been his predecessor's creation, that kept it alive during its infancy. John Ehle, a young writer and instructor at UNC-Chapel Hill, attracted Governor Sanford's attention through a provocative article called "What's the Matter with Chapel Hill?" in which the scholar criticized the university system's lack of support for the arts. Within a few months of its publication in the Raleigh *News and Observer*, Ehle had become the governor's special assistant for new projects and one of the prime movers behind the arts school. Vittorio Giannini, a talented and charismatic composer and music teacher, became the first president of the NCSA. Giannini's contageous enthusiasm, tireless work, and international connections established the school on a truly professional footing. Dr. James Semans, the first chairman of the school's board of trustees, and his wife Mary used their personal and political influence to garner support for the school and helped to steer it through many rocky shoals.

A Passionate Preference is impeccably researched and features extensive notes and bibliography and a thorough, well-designed index. Anyone interested in recent North Carolina history, education, or the performing arts would enjoy it. The book also provides great insight into the realities of state politics. Descriptions of the machinations in which the NCSA's supporters engaged are a major source of the humor in this delightfully witty history. ***A Passionate Preference*** is highly recommended for public and academic libraries and special libraries collecting North Caroliniana or materials in public policy, political science, education, or arts administration.

Leslie Banner, a native of Asheville, earned her Ph.D. in English literature from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her extensive writings on native Appalachian fiction include her 1984 doctoral dissertation, *"The North Carolina Mountaineer in Native Fiction."* She is

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Elizabeth Bramm Dunn, Duke University

Betsy Holloway. ***Heaven for Beginners: Recollections of a Southern Town.*** Orlando: Persimmon Press, 1986. 236 pp. ISBN 0-9616500-0-1.

How did a book about Durham come to be written in Florida? Florida resident Betsy Holloway, a Durham native, has fond memories and recollections of her hometown. When *The Orlando Sentinel* sponsored a contest in which readers submitted letters describing their hometown, she was one of the winners. The paper sent a reporter to Durham to gather background information for a feature article which someone sent to the *Durham Morning Herald.* The *Herald* published an article of its own encouraging Holloway to expand her letter into a full length book. This was the beginning of ***Heaven for Beginners: Recollections of a Southern Town.***

The book starts with a short history of Durham. This overview includes how Durham got its name, the story of the distinctive Durham tobacco, the manufacture and sale of tobacco by the Dukes, and the development of Trinity College into Duke University. From this brief history Holloway turns her attention toward her own history, starting with her parents. From this point on, ***Heaven for Beginners*** is a blend of local and social history, personal recollections and family experiences.

Holloway recalls her childhood home: "I loved the house with its substantial-looking brick exterior, its handsome wood floors, cheerful sun parlor, and pretty blue-tiled bathroom." She describes the house from a child's perspective, even confessing to living in terror of the living room chandelier. She takes the reader on a room by room tour offering insight into her family as well as customs of the time. The tour progresses from the self-contained world of the house, to the yard, and then extends into the neighborhood.

Next Holloway gives us a glimpse of the entertainment available for Durham citizens. She tells of the unveiling of Lakewood Park, "a gay and glittering amusement facility" that provided much fun for locals for over thirty years. She describes programs sponsored by the Durham Recreation Department and the creation of the Children's Museum (which grew into the North Carolina Museum of Life and Science).

At home, the radio was the family's primary source of entertainment. They listened to shows such as *Lux Radio Theatre, Duffy's Tavern, Truth or Conseqences,* and *Amos 'n' Andy.* Holloway recalls with particular fondness her weekly or biweekly outings with her mother in Durham and their annual outing to Raleigh, as well as events offered by Duke University and the annual family vacation.

As Holloway recalls grammar school, we come to know the Twaddell School and the beginnings of Watts Street School. Her fond memories of favorite teachers and classmates often stir the reader's own.

Holloway had a great appetite for reading and enjoyed it tremendously. She went from the Bobbsey Twins, Nancy Drew, and Judy Bolton to the *Durham Morning Herald,* and soon was caught up in the society editor's column, "The World of Women."

Church played an important role in her family, who attended the Asbury Methodist Church, "one of the many Methodist churches founded or aided by members of the Duke family ... " She recalls that her family attended both the morning and evening service on Sunday. Also, Holloway relates how busy Sunday School kept her, and the many projects she was involved in during Vacation Bible School but her favorite memory of church was the Bible stories.

Holloway shows how World War II affected Durham. She recalls the housing shortages, the rationing of tires, gasoline, and metal. Details such as the newspaper's Weekly War Ration Guide give her story more vivid local color.

The last chapter in the book describes downtown Durham as it appeared to Holloway as a child of eight or nine. She takes the reader along on her Saturday excursions, stopping by several businesses of that era. Included in these Saturday outings were her visits to the Durham Library. In her book Holloway tells how the Durham Library opened its doors on February 10, 1898.

The book closes by describing Durham as it is today.

Betsy Holloway attended Duke University. She moved to Florida in 1963 and lives with her husband and son in Orlando. ***Heaven for Beginners*** is her first book. A work of personal memoirs with a local backdrop, it includes family experiences to which each reader can relate. The illustrations included are an added attraction that help to carry out the visual image created by the author's writing. There are also a bibliography and index. The book would be a good choice for any public library as a book of recollections or social history of Durham. The author herself opens the book with a quote that is quite appro-

priate, "Home interprets heaven. Home is heaven for beginners."

Sue Lithgo, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Mena Webb. ***Jule Carr: General Without an Army***. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987. 306 pp. $19.95 ISBN 0-8078-1705-8.

Jule Carr, the very readable new biography of industrialist Julian Shakespeare Carr by Durham writer Mena Webb, is a welcome addition to the growing bookshelf of histories about the people and events which shaped modern North Carolina. Carr's story is one North Carolinians need to know more about if they are to understand how and why their state came to be the industrial leader of the South.

Carr is a well-known figure to Tar Heel history buffs for his amazing rise to fame and fortune as the world's first prominent tobacco manufacturer. After a childhood spent comfortably in a Chapel Hill mercantile family, Carr joined the exodus of the ambitious to a new factory center, Durham. There, during the 1870s, letters were pouring in from former Union soldiers requesting some of the fine smoking tobacco they first consumed while bumming under the command of General William T. Sherman. Carr joined with tobacconist W.T. Blackwell to market the brand they called "Bull Durham" on a worldwide basis. Carr's astute sense of merchandising put the virile Bull's visage on surfaces everywhere, even on the great pyramids of Egypt.

The success of the Durham brand made Carr one of North Carolina's first multi-millionaires. Wealth also led him into other fields of enterprise and public service. Carr joined with various associates in bringing the cotton mill industry to the growing towns of the Piedmont. He also became one of the most active Methodist laymen in the state, and was instrumental in the relocation of tiny Trinity College from its home in Randolph County to a new campus in west Durham in spite of his status as a UNC graduate. Moreover, Carr involved himself in a wide range of benevolent activities, taught Sunday school through much of his adult life, dabbled in politics, and became a "General" (hence Ms. Webb's subtitle) in the movement to honor Confederate veterans.

This book is, at its best, a familial history of Jule Carr. Ms. Webb, a novelist and journalist, deftly paints a verbal portrait of the significance of family and friends to this energetic figure. Ms. Webb is less agile when trying to place Carr in the context of his times, particularly in fitting him into the complex spectrum of political upheaval which followed in the wake of the industrial growth Carr helped engender. Like other scholars still trying to figure out this seminal period, Ms. Webb has underestimated the significance of Methodist religious values in the making of Carr as an entrepreneur and philanthropist. In many ways (as Carr admitted himself in 1908 in a letter this history overlooks) Methodism was the driving force behind a significant group of manufacturers, including the Odells and the Dukes, all of whom had close ties to the charismatic leader of Trinity College, Reverend Braxton Craven. This is an element of the North Carolina story yet to be developed.

Still, if the book is imperfect analytically, it is nevertheless richly rewarding in the human touch it gives to the life of a man who never allowed himself to forget that commerce and manufacturing are principally social endeavors. Librarians will find that the book will appeal to a wide range of readers, from the casual request for a good biography to the eager pursuer of the Tar Heel past. The book belongs in most local library history rooms and will be of value for undergraduates in area colleges. In fact, it has only one serious flaw. The curious reader will long for more illustrations of the "Bull" that made Durham famous and Durham's first success story about the very wealthy.

Gary Freeze, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Victoria Byerly. ***Hard Times Cotton Mill Girls: Personal Histories of Womanhood and Poverty in the South***. Ithaca, N.Y.: ILR Press, New York School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University. 233 pp. ISBN 0-87546-128X (cloth) $26.00; ISBN 0-875546-129-8 (paper) $9.95.

Victoria Byerly does not believe that "You can't go home again." Byerly began work in the Amazon Cotton Mill in Thomasville upon completing high school in 1967. She was in the fourth generation of her family to work at Amazon, but, unlike that of most of her family members, her tenure at Amazon was brief. A scholarship committee at her high school arranged college admission and financial aid for her, and Byerly left the mill. In 1980, after college and years away from North Carolina, Byerly returned to Thomasville armed with a tape recorder to interview women who lived the life that she had left.

Hard Times Cotton Mill Girls is Victoria Byerly's exploration of the mileau from which she emerged. It is a collection of interviews with

twenty women whose lives were shaped by the culture of the mill towns in which they lived. The women are from towns throughout Piedmont North Carolina; they are evenly divided between white and black, and the ages of the women range from twenties to eighties. These women tell of the spread of industry in the Piedmont, how families moved from farm to factory work, and how this change affected families, especially women. Readers who view this industrialization positively will find evidence to support their position, for several women mention their eagerness to work in the mills and the measure of freedom that their mill paychecks gave them. Readers more attuned to the burdens of industrial labor will find ample testimony about poor working conditions, arbitrary supervisors, and sexual and racial discrimination.

Most of the women interviewed for this book worked in the mills, but mill work was but one part of their lives. The women also talked about families, both the ones they were born into and the ones they created; social relations in mill towns; and their own aspirations and disappointments. These are tales of deprivations, scant schooling, early childbearing, difficult family relations, social and racial divisions, and the struggle to attain a decent standard of living and peace of mind. Heartbreaks and injustices are recounted, yet many interviews are also tales of emotional and spiritual triumph, if not material success. The interviews with Aliene Walser and Billie Parks Douglas are alone worth the price of the book.

It is difficult for a reviewer to assess the sources used for this volume. As a genre, oral history has obvious limitations; readers come to a volume of oral histories knowing these limitations and either accepting the genre or not. Only one of the women interviewed asked for the protection of a pseudonym, and all the women are listed with the towns where they currently reside. The text is supplemented by twenty photographs. These illustrations, particularly the portraits of some of the women in their youth, enhance the volume. The interviews are organized in sections with titles such as "From Farm to Factory" and "Marriage, Motherhood, and Work." This organization is not completely successful since most interviews range across a woman's whole life and so could fit in several sections. Byerly precedes each section with a brief essay. This too is not entirely successful. These essays, along with Cletus Daniel's general introduction, appear to be addressed to an academic audience, while the interviews themselves have a more general appeal. An index allows the reader to compare specific topics in several interviews. Recommended for public, high school, college, and university libraries.

Eileen McGrath, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Kaye Gibbons. ***Ellen Foster***. Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1987. 146 pp. $11.95. ISBN 0-912697-52-0.

"I just worked in the trail my mama left." Ellen Foster is remembering gardening with her mother, but the statement could apply to all the efforts eleven-year-old Ellen makes to get her life on the right track. She cares for her invalid mother until her death, then coexists in an uneasy truce with her violent father. When the situation becomes intolerable, she lives with her art teacher until the court assigns her back to her family: first, to her spiteful grandmother, who blames her for her father's actions, and, later, to an aunt and cousin who have no room for Ellen in their lives. All the while, Ellen dreams of belonging to a "real" family, and, when she spots her "new mama," nothing can stand in her way. Ellen is a survivor who snares the reader with her unself-conscious courage and gritty determination.

Upon reading this novel, Eudora Welty exclaimed, "The life in it, the honesty of thought and eye and feeling and word!" Kaye Gibbons has a rare ear for the cadence of common speech. Words come naturally to Ellen. When she hears that her old house is occupied again, it is not simply "rented out," but is "rented out to a family of four." Her life is altered by the "romantic" fever her mother suffered from as a girl; she is entirely too familiar with the function of "undertaking cars"; and, on fine occasions, she wears "patting leather" shoes. Gibbons also sums up people with remarkable economy. Ellen's Aunt Nadine is a case in point: "When she is not redecorating or shopping with Dora she demonstrates food slicers in your home."

That conversational tone permeates the novel, since it is told entirely through Ellen's voice. Scenes of her present life alternate with those from her past. Both strands of the story work toward the point of the narrator's becoming Ellen *Foster*, a new identity which she signifies by choosing a new surname.

Ellen's journey is not simply one from a chaotic home life to security and love. She is also working through her own views about other people. Ellen learns that blood kin may not necessarily protect her better than caring strangers. She also must revise her views about racial differences, which she received before she was able to

reason. Ellen's firm friendship with the black child, Starletta, is a constant throughout the novel, but a great deal of growth must occur on Ellen's part. Starletta's secure home life, in spite of grinding poverty, runs counterpoint to Ellen's volatile environment, and Ellen comes to respect as well as value their situation.

Ellen's character is almost frighteningly real. She is a spunky girl who has been forced to cope prematurely because of her family's neglect. She can plan monthly budgets while leaving her father enough liquor money, pay the utilities, and manage the cooking: "It is best to buy in bulk," she notes. Yet she is still a small child in many ways, who enjoys having friends over to visit and playing with nice toys. She is afraid of what happens when people she has known are buried.

Ellen Foster is Kaye Gibbons's first novel. It has garnered accolades from a range of critics and authors including Walker Percy, Alfred Kazin, Elizabeth Spencer, and Gordon Lish. Gibbons has been interviewed by Bob Edwards of National Public Radio. Her achievement is all the more impressive in that this novel was published before the completion of her bachelor's degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Born in Nash County in 1960, Gibbons was graduated from Rocky Mount Senior High School and studied for two years at North Carolina State University. In high school she received National Honor Society and North Carolina Veterans Association scholarships, and she was a finalist for the National Council of Teachers Writing Award. She also won the 1978 Poetry Prize of the North Carolina Arts Council. Gibbons and her husband Michael live in Raleigh with their three-year-old daughter, Mary.

Ellen Foster is well-suited for public and academic library collections of contemporary or Southern fiction and is also appropriate for secondary school collections. It is recommended both for its focus on contemporary social issues as well as for its own literary merit.

Margaretta Yarborough, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill