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Karen L. Cox, ed. *Destination Dixie: Tourism and Southern History*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012. ix + 315 pp. Illustrations, notes, and index. \$74.95 (cloth); \$26.95 (paper).

Harvey H. Jackson III. *The Rise and Decline of the Redneck Riviera: An Insider's History of the Florida–Alabama Coast*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012. 334 pp. Illustrations, maps, essay on sources, and index. \$28.95 (cloth); \$19.95 (paper).

Henry Knight. *Tropic of Hopes: California, Florida, and the Selling of American Paradise, 1869–1929*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013. xii + 266 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, bibliography, and index. \$74.95.

Catherine Cocks. *Tropical Whites: The Rise of the Tourist South in the Americas*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013. ix + 255 pp. Illustrations, plates, notes, and index. \$59.95.

In the last decade, tourism has matured as a historical subfield. It has expanded geographically, temporally, and thematically and has even marked perhaps its first major historiographical watershed—a seeming sign of maturity—as historians in the last fifteen years have either extended or challenged Hal Rothman's implication of tourism as an erosive force in *Devil's Bargains* (1998). Four recent books consider tourism in various parts of the South as it relates to the region, the nation, and the Americas more broadly. The first two books refine our understanding of how tourism reworked Southern communities and Southern heritage, while the second two recover conceptions held by U.S. citizens more than a century ago to show how these ideas enabled promoters to recast tropical or semitropical places as ideal leisure destinations without abandoning the comfort, safety, and virtue of domestic society. Each of the books in different ways also examines the complex interplay of race, class, and geography.

Destination Dixie, an anthology edited by Karen L. Cox, interprets struggles over meanings of the past at thirteen Southern destinations ranging from individual heritage sites to cities. One might question the need for another collection of essays about Southern tourism and depictions of history at Southern destinations. After all, no fewer than a half dozen such works have appeared since W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *Where These Memories Grow* (2000). Yet Cox's essayists rethink the tourist South by showing not only stereotypes purveyed by boosters and consumed by willing tourists but also the varying extents to which social change, evolving historical scholarship, and changing consumer demands supplanted older narratives and imagery with newer ones. In the spirit of James Loewen's *Lies Across America* (1999), but with only minimal topical overlap and greater contextualization that comes with examining fewer sites, these essays shed light on a number of important tourist destinations that previously received little if any scholarly attention. Some contributors make huge temporal jumps that leave unanswered questions, but overall, *Destination Dixie* ably explores the challenges of injecting public history informed by modern scholarship into heritage sites where gatekeepers and visitors do not always embrace it.

The anthology includes four sections ("People & Places," "Race & Slavery," "War & Remembrance," and "Landscape & Memory"), but these categories are hardly mutually exclusive. In the first section, essays on the homes and hometowns of four iconic figures explain and critique how their respective communities regarded their legacy. Locals and visitors in Hannibal, Missouri, were slow to abandon the idea of the town as living proxy for Mark Twain's fictional St. Petersburg. Conversely, Olympian Jesse Owens' Alabama hometown never fully embraced its most famous son. In between, the Margaret Mitchell House and the Elvis Presley Museum failed to reconcile the presentation of race and class, leaving the former unable to account for how Mitchell could have written a racist novel *and* demonstrated progressive racial thinking, and the latter too blinded by "The King's" success to grapple with the impoverished community that produced him. The second section reveals a similar difficulty in contextualizing the past at other Southern destinations. Somerset Place State Historic Site bet its future on a moonlight-and-magnolias version of North Carolina's antebellum history, only incorporating black history in response to sagging visitation. While Charleston addressed African American history through accretions in its tour-guide exam, Selma boosters awkwardly packaged both the Lost Cause and Civil Rights Movement to cater to a segmented tourist market without forging any new interpretive synthesis.

The book's third section analyzes how ancestral organizations like the United Daughters of the Confederacy constrained the history that was related at three parks designed to commemorate wars: Yorktown National Battlefield Park, Janney Furnace Park, and Stone Mountain Park. Echoing a pattern

observed in Charlene Mires, *Independence Hall in American Memory* (2002), efforts to revise a consensus view are particularly challenging in iconic places, although admittedly Janney Furnace, which never supplied a scrap of iron to the Confederacy, should have felt less of a burden than Stone Mountain, where Confederate leaders were literally etched in stone. Choices of whose history to present proved contentious. Janney Furnace ignored opportunities to engage the mostly black Anniston City Schools, while the Stone Mountain laser show's projection of Martin Luther King Jr.'s face onto the Confederate monument only "momentarily permitted tourists to imagine a racially progressive South" (p. 236).

The fourth and final section of *Destination Dixie* explores three landscapes (New Orleans, the Great Smoky Mountains, and the Everglades) whose distinctiveness belies their clear connection to the book's broader themes. Above-ground tombs in "cities of the dead" might appear just another marker of New Orleans' unconventional landscape—alongside live-oak canopies, river levees, iron fences, and shotgun houses—but in death, their occupants' spatial segregation reveals social divisions as crisp as those that prompted Selma promoters to coin the slogan "From Civil War to Civil Rights and Beyond" (p. 160). Similarly, by presenting a one-dimensional history of white pioneers in log cabins in the Great Smoky Mountains, the National Park Service did what so many other agents in the book did; it gave visitors what they expected. So did Cherokees and Seminoles, although they succeeded in exerting some control over their own image, an approach African American leaders attempted in Selma.

The careful reader will discern many other comparisons across the book's sections. One such thread is the tendency of tourist narratives to focus on exemplary individuals whose achievements obscure race and class struggles. As with the fixation on Elvis Presley's improbable rags-to-riches experience in leaving Tupelo, which deflected attention from systemic poverty, Charleston tour guides depicted African American blacksmith Philip Simmons, whose decorative ironwork adorned many city gardens, as "verifiable proof of the city's current egalitarian spirit" (p. 143). Similarly, until recent years, Charleston plantation tours mirrored elisions at the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Somerset Place. In all three instances, narratives ignored slavery or characterized it as benign. On the flip side of the staging of exemplary actors, Charleston's carriage tour guides also encouraged visitors to view contemporary African American sweet-grass basket weavers as "authentic primitives" (p. 140). These depictions echoed the attempts of earlier guides to cast Nellie Smith, an elderly black woman who happened to occupy the dwelling that inspired Twain's creation of Huckleberry Finn's house, as a living embodiment of a supposedly unbroken link with the Old South.

Chapters on Selma, Alabama, and Janney Furnace (a Confederate iron works near Anniston, Alabama) make clear that no singular lesson emerges for balancing competing narratives in tourist areas. Violent acts against activists participating in the Freedom Rides in Anniston in 1961 and the Selma-to-Montgomery March in 1965 were signal moments in the Civil Rights Movement, but their memories created tension in communities that tried to latch onto mostly white tourists' interest in anything evoking the antebellum period or the Civil War. The reader is left to wonder why one Alabama town (Selma) was able to incorporate, if not integrate, black history into its master narrative while another (Anniston) failed to do so. Perhaps part of the answer lies in varying degrees of awareness of the dividends accruing to communities willing to see the traveling public as the segmented market it is. As at Somerset Place, at Stone Mountain Park a singular focus on the mythic Old South or Lost Cause proved incapable of meeting expectations for tourist revenues, necessitating a broader focus.

While *Destination Dixie* provides new insights into the state of Southern history as consumed by tourists and extends inquiry to previously neglected Southern attractions, *The Rise and Decline of the Redneck Riviera* by Harvey H. Jackson III rethinks the tourist South through a rare look at Southern beach communities and Southerners on vacation. Much of the existing scholarship on U.S. seaside resorts has fixated on prototypical places like Newport, Coney Island, and Atlantic City. Few studies have examined Southern beach towns. In fact, we know more about Southern planters' sojourns at Northern resorts than about everyday Southerners' travels in their own region. Focusing primarily on the 1940s to the present, Jackson explores the coastal arc between Gulf Shores, Alabama, and Panama City, Florida, which stood relatively underdeveloped and isolated into the early twentieth century on the periphery of the "Cotton Kingdom" that sprawled across the inland Deep South, including Alabama and the northernmost edge of the Florida Panhandle.

Jackson, who maintains a family beach house in a Florida town along what came to be dubbed the "Redneck Riviera," traces how this coastal stretch came to be a prime destination, first for working-class white Alabamians and later for more upper-middle-class white Southerners. The coast stands in contrast to the much heavier visitation by Northerners in peninsular Florida. As Jackson relates, World War II quickened the pace of development of commercialized beach amusements. Like Las Vegas but on a much smaller scale, Panama City Beach and Fort Walton in particular garnered a reputation as places where one could go to step outside the accepted bounds of inland behavior. Yet the Florida-Alabama coast retained low-key atmosphere through the 1960s, with unpretentious businesses such as the Flora-Bama Lounge and equally modest beach cottages,—except during spring break, when youthful excess

appeared in Panama City Beach as early as 1954. As with the attractions in Cox's *Destination Dixie*, Jackson's Redneck Riviera was largely a white playground. African Americans were largely absent except at a couple of noted Jim Crow beaches; and Destin, Florida, counted only four blacks among its 3,672 residents as late as 1980.

The change that most interests Jackson is not the rise of the spring-break phenomenon—although it is inseparable from his larger argument—but rather that the Florida–Alabama coast was becoming just another slice of the Sun Belt even as one New York journalist christened it the “Redneck Riviera” in 1978. Jackson credits the transformation to several factors: developers, promoters, retirees, tax incentives, and storms. A pair of hurricanes in 1975 and 1979 opened up federal disaster relief that stimulated new residential development along the coast. Along with the developers and land speculators that flocked there in the wake of the storms, the Reagan administration's introduction of rental property purchases as a tax shelter coincided with a growing wave of affluent retirees of the “Greatest Generation” looking for investments and leisure. The influence of the pastel planned community of Seaside, begun in 1981, and the rise of tourist development councils' branding of the region's beaches, beginning in the mid-1980s, lent new cachet to the coast.

Although Jackson generally omits scholarly works from his essay on sources, *The Rise and Decline of the Redneck Riviera* rehearses a longstanding theme in tourism history. First articulated by social scientists, the theme of tourism's negative impacts on visited peoples and places crystallized in Rothman's *Devil's Bargains*, which stressed the cultural, economic, social, and environmental costs of increasingly outside, often corporate, control of tourism development. Reminiscent of the affluent tourists and second-home buyers who descended upon the American West, Jackson's book reads like a tale of deep-pocketed outsiders transforming the beach in their own image, except that he shows that just about everyone on the Redneck Riviera was from somewhere else. Jackson might agree with Rothman, but he draws more explicitly from David Brooks' *Bobos in Paradise* (2000), in this case lamenting “the Lexus driving, latte sipping, Republican voting Bourgeois Bohemians” from affluent Atlanta and Birmingham suburbs even as he acknowledges that they too arrived at the beach with dreams similar to their less affluent predecessors (p. 154). And they arrived in numbers that produced highway gridlock and rampant condominium development, drove mom-and-pop restaurants out of business in their quest for upscale dining, and compromised the very environment to which they were drawn. Ultimately, Jackson may not explicitly engage tourism scholarship, but his book speaks squarely to the tourist industry's interconnections with broader developments both within and beyond the South.

Just as Jackson differentiates the Florida–Alabama coast from the inland lower South, Henry Knight distinguishes peninsular Florida from the South in his recent book, *Tropic of Hopes*. Knight's study represents a rare comparative history of tourism development, one that makes a variety of connections: between peninsular Florida and southern California, between tourist and agricultural promotion of each, and between each of these areas and the rest of their respective states. Unlike Jackson's Redneck Riviera, Knight's semitropical destinations drew tourists and newcomers who hailed mostly from well outside his focal regions. Rather than a balanced story of promoters, businesses, residents, and tourists, *Tropic of Hopes*, by Knight's own admission, is interested solely in promoters and their representations of place.

Tropic of Hopes reveals rivalries between boosters in southern California and peninsular Florida. Each region's boosters traded barbs to build their own reputation. Floridians pointed to California's great distance from the nation's population centers, while Californians deemed Florida unsafe for Northern whites. Each state claimed better citrus and a more healthful climate, though in fact one had too much water and the other not enough. Yet, despite clear differences in climate, labor, and topography, both states shared a Spanish past, a difficult landscape, and remoteness from the U.S. heartland. Boosters in each learned to recast liabilities as assets. Above all, in contrast to Kevin Starr's *Inventing the Dream* (1986), which emphasized the problematic nature of semitropical imagery and hence the fixation on Mediterranean analogies, Knight points out that contemporary understandings of the Mediterranean region lumped it with semitropical lands. He deemphasizes the debate over whether Florida and California were Mediterranean or semitropical, viewing both as "tropics of hope" rather than "tropics of decay," with the latter applying to the assumably corrupt, unhealthful, and immoral Southern Europe and Latin America (p. 10). In contrast, promoters insisted that in California and Florida, "white tourists could reap the benefits of healthful contact with premodern nature and cultures without abandoning the comforts of progressive modernity" (p. 45).

Boosters packaged the southern parts of these states as both tropical and republican. In other words, they shared the exotic appeal of the Latin world but were thoroughly American frontiers conducive to "health-restoring leisure and rewarding labor" (p. 3). This message appealed to the intended audience: relatively affluent Americans living in Northern cities who sought places apart from what they viewed as the ills of industrialization. Mass immigration, urban growth, and the gradual redefinition of "free labor" from meaning the work of independent producers to signifying a system in which workers were merely able to contract for a wage, seemed to them to threaten the nation's founding principles. The semitropical fringes of the United States in turn struck them as ripe with potential for rebuilding republican ideology.

Through his careful reading of promotional pamphlets, travel narratives, popular magazines, and advertisements, Knight does more than recount rhetoric; he exposes the hypocrisy that underlay it. Indeed, the appearance of republican virtue relied on obscuring the economy that sustained it. Anglo Americans sought to conquer these frontiers and marginalize the voices of minorities whose labor was necessary to support the myth. They romanticized the Spanish fantasy past in southern California even as agribusiness forced Mexican American small farmers into menial wage labor. Promoters' republican rhetoric, ironically, was rooted more in scientific racism than the nation's founding principles. The supposed potential of both states as settlements of white yeoman farmers belied the expansion of agribusiness to exotic crops like citrus fruits. These promoters drew inspiration from a series of guidebook writers, including Harriet Beecher Stowe. In 1873, some two decades after her famous antislavery novel, Stowe's experience wintering in northeastern Florida led her to publish *Palmetto Leaves*, in which she extolled the semitropical peninsula as an ideal place for white Northerners to pursue leisure because they might rely on African Americans, whom she called an "ideal proletariat," to work the land (p. 40).

After carefully juxtaposing the transformation of both states' promotional imagery in the last half of the nineteenth century, Knight turns his focus to Progressive Era land reclamation in California's Imperial Valley and Florida's Everglades. These "final frontiers of conquest" tested entrepreneurs' ability to realize a new American Eden and, when viewed closely, underscored their continuing pattern of dissociating ideal from reality (p. 117). Promoters in the late 1890s eyed the Imperial Valley as the next Riverside, California, with "independent" settlers of more modest means (p. 130). However, a shift to cotton production accelerated landowners' dependence on Mexican migrant cotton pickers, who performed the hard work that, if done by "Americans," was supposed to herald a new age of republican virtue. Likewise, in the 1890s, a combination of a killing freeze in northern Florida and the discovery of the link between mosquitoes and yellow fever and malaria enticed entrepreneurs deep into South Florida. There the exotic presence of the "independent" Seminoles and the promise of large-scale drainage of the Everglades brought tourists and investors, but the early "back to the land" marketing emphasis quickly yielded to a vision of "progressive white communities that could make use of disenfranchised African American workers" whose labor made it a life worth living for newcomers to the region (p. 150).

Knight's final chapter also traces Progressive Era promotion of cities, specifically Los Angeles and Miami. As with other aspects of the interstate rivalry, peninsular Florida's late-blooming development compared to southern California meant that Miami mimicked L.A.'s example. This chapter is rather conventional, reprising the typical theme of suburban whites living

the American Dream through independent homeownership, racial exclusion, class stratification, and the cultivation of home gardens. Like New Orleans, Los Angeles reportedly was modernizing while retaining the romance of its exotic past. As in rural settings, Mexican heritage offered a welcome abstraction whenever it lent to the city's romantic image, but Mexican Americans drew disdain as a modern citizenry. Likewise, Miami dissociated itself from real or imagined troubles of Northern cities by pointing to its supposed lack of immigrants. Although Knight's findings may add little new understanding to urban historians, his characterization of semitropical cities as "New Edens of the Saxon Home-Seeker," which appropriates language from period booster literature, makes clear their connection to his larger argument (p. 155).

Tropic of Hopes ends with a hint that semitropical California and Florida provided both templates and staging grounds for investment in the real tropics. More than merely models for later expansion of U.S. interests in the Americas, however, California and Florida could instead be seen as part of a larger Pan-American tourist South.

In her sweeping history of tourism in a region she calls the Southland, Catherine Cocks' *Tropical Whites* adds to a considerable body of work on tourism in Latin America and the Caribbean. Generally concentrating on the consequences of tourism, these studies rarely examine more than a single case such as Mexico, Cuba, Jamaica, or the Bahamas. Those that do, such as Dennis Merrill's *Negotiating Paradise* (2009) and Christine Skwiot's *The Purposes of Paradise* (2010), explore the role of tourists in extending U.S. imperial or cultural reach. Conversely, *Tropical Whites* chronicles the advent of a new mindset that liberated U.S. travelers to imagine the benefits of touring the tropics.

Tracing roughly the same time period as Knight, Cocks is less interested in the promotional remaking of the image of the land itself than in the reconceptualization of the Southland from "white man's grave" to "ideal winter resorts" through the changing relationship between tropical nature and human bodies (p. 2). She shows how nature progressed from being seen as "the source of the problem solved by civilization" to "the solution to the problem posed by civilization" (p. 10). For this to happen, Americans had to replace their fixation on nature's power to shape humans, or climatic determinism, with a new belief in humanity's power to conquer nature. Cocks argues that the tourist industry became a leading force behind this change through its creation of "tropical whites." More critically, unlike Knight's claim that only California and Florida were capable of becoming ideal havens for U.S. citizens to experience a tropical lifestyle, Cocks demonstrates that a cultural transformation championed by the tourist industry enabled Americans to shed concerns and move confidently beyond U.S. borders.

Tropical Whites identifies several major factors that created what she calls a “regulated Arcadia” (p. 17). The rise of modern medicine—especially phototherapy, germ theory, and mosquito-eradication measures—quieted negative views of the tropics long held by medical geographers. Indeed, physicians and promoters recast tropical climates as “eternal spring” (p. 77). By the 1920s, long before the oft-cited rise of widespread air conditioning, they prescribed not only winter warmth but summer heat, which purportedly invigorated rather than enervating travelers. Tourists responded to the idea of tropical sunshine as a fountain of youth and embraced tanning, “a playful experiment in becoming nonwhite” that connoted newfound power over environment. By regulating how much sunlight their skin absorbed, tropical whites “could have both nature and civilization; nonwhites remained trapped by nature” (p. 122). The expansion of commercial agriculture, especially citrus and bananas, not only made fruit more abundant in U.S. markets but also sold the idea of a carefully cultivated Eden where tourists could eat fruit right off the trees. The emergence of the cruise industry, which Cocks dates to the 1890s (in stark contrast to a prior scholarly focus on the 1970s after jet travel hurt steamship companies), also helped transform the tropics by separating tourism and colonization, making it possible for “tropical whites” to see these places not as investment opportunities but as pleasure grounds. Like a “floating resort hotel,” the cruise ship offered precisely the regulated experience of the tropics that created tropical whites (p. 55). Despite Cocks’ welcome attention to cruises, she diverges from the generally accepted view of tourism as intertwined with imperialism.

Building on Diana Selig, *Americans All: The Cultural Gifts Movement* (2008), *Tropical Whites* explores “racial gifts,” or the exchange of “the gift of hospitality for the gift of appreciation” (p. 10). Cocks sees racial gifts as central to an emerging “idea of culture,” which sprang from the shift of attention from primarily seeing natural, or biological, difference to seeing social difference. Closely tied to racial gifts and liberation from nature’s grip is her examination of “heterosexual liberalism,” in which tropical whites might absorb not only sunshine but also the romantic sensuousness of the tropics. Doing so, said promoters, would protect white marriage by infusing white tourists with a passion that would prevent them from crossing the color line. Cocks cites racial gifts as evidence that tourism is not always a harmful force on culture and society, as Rothman argued. Although promoters and tourists celebrated tropical peoples without according them many opportunities for rights and social mobility, they fostered a climate in which the seeds of racial moderation might germinate. In this way, Cocks not only diverges from the main argument in *Devil’s Bargains*, she also parts company with a number of Latin American and Caribbean historians who have seen mainly negative results of Pan American tourism.

One of the hazards of a book with a Pan American scope is that it cannot easily examine some concepts throughout the region. The idea of culture is one such concept, and Cocks chooses to tie her examination of it largely to Mexico, where it fits well with the Mexican government's modernization strategy in the 1920s and '30s. For Mexico, tourism became a means of opposing U.S. colonialism, and its government resurrected the Aztec past and pre-Lenten carnivals, stimulated folk art traditions, and reworked its immigration policy to smooth the way for tourists who would "buy culture and leave money"—the opposite of immigrants who "bring their culture with them and seek money" (p. 172). To what extent did Mexico typify the Latin American embrace of racial gifts as a modernization strategy? Likewise, Cocks turns to Mexico to support her notion of heterosexual liberalism, finding tourists' romanticizing of traditional Mexican courting rituals another way they absorbed racial gifts, but one wonders how portable this concept was to other parts of the Americas. Additionally, Cocks does little with cities of the Southland. We find little if any mention of Havana, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, or Veracruz, among others. Still, *Tropical Whites* provides a sweeping, highly original portrait of change in the Americas and situates tourism at its heart.

Collectively these four books do more than suggest the maturation of tourism scholarship. They underscore tourism's indelible imprint on so many facets of modern society and do much to integrate the study of tourism into the broader channels of historical inquiry. They also provide compelling new evidence of the complex ways that tourism reflects and sometimes reshapes race and class relations. Finally, however the tourist South is defined, they suggest the need for continued efforts to examine individual case studies within comparative frames.

J. Mark Souther is an associate professor of history at Cleveland State University. An award-winning author, he has published *New Orleans on Parade: Tourism and the Transformation of the Crescent City* (2006, 2013); *American Tourism: Constructing a National Tradition* (2012); and numerous articles. He is currently working on a history of responses to urban decline in Cleveland, Ohio.