

San Jose State University

From the Selected Works of Patricia Evridge Hill

February, 2015

**Atlanta's Living Legacy: A History of Grady Memorial Hospital and Its People, by
Martin Moran**

Patricia Evridge Hill, *San Jose State University*



Available at: <https://works.bepress.com/patricia-hill/12/>

a reader might expect a discussion of Route 66, which is barely mentioned in passing; historic preservation of significant buildings; the humor of Will Rogers; or perhaps extensive recollections of ordinary people in small towns across the state. Someone reading the essays will find more analysis than storytelling, with Tulsa and Oklahoma City appearing more frequently than red dirt farms. Those who realize that the book is not nearly as folksy as the title suggests will be in for a revealing, thought-provoking introduction to a state many people, even native Oklahomans, did not know existed.

Wichita State University

JAY M. PRICE

Atlanta's Living Legacy: A History of Grady Memorial Hospital and Its People. By Martin Moran. (Atlanta: Kimbark Publishing, 2012. Pp. [vi], 313. \$40.00, ISBN 978-0-615-53009-3.)

Institutional histories are making a comeback, whether published by university presses (for example, Marie Pannell Thurston's *St. Philip's College: A Point of Pride on San Antonio's Eastside* [College Station, Tex., 2013]) or by the institutions themselves (for example, Michael Weingarten's *History of the Boston Synagogue, 1888–2013: A 125th Anniversary Celebration* [Boston, 2013]). Physician Martin Moran's history of Atlanta's Grady Memorial Hospital is an example of a third trend—a study written by a local expert and published locally. Moran is an astute guide to the city and its public hospital. Because of its roles as a teaching hospital, a research institution, and a facility serving the poor, Grady's history is linked to those of Emory University's and Morehouse College's medical schools and to the city's politics. Moran's scope includes not only the story of the hospital that memorialized Atlanta journalist Henry Woodfin Grady when it opened in 1892 but also the priorities of civic boosters who established the hospital and those of the politicians and residents who determined funding levels into the twenty-first century.

A one-page introduction lays out Moran's themes: that Grady's financial health depended on property taxes paid by residents unlikely to use a "charity" hospital; that Grady served as a "safety net" not only for poor people but also for private hospitals relieved of the burden of caring for Atlanta's indigents; that Grady trained about a quarter of Georgia's physicians; and that the hospital's impact and success depended in large part on the dedication of staff and volunteers (p. vi). Moran spreads his analysis across ten chapters and an epilogue, making it clear that the fortunes of both of the segregated hospitals within the Grady Memorial Hospital system, known as White Grady and Black Grady, depended as much on taxpayers as they did on the quality of medical care.

Atlanta politicians receive the lion's share of blame for conditions that, according to Emory doctors' reports, included rats biting newborns at Black Grady in the 1920s. NAACP president Walter White reinforced Grady's particular version of separate but not-at-all equal in his autobiography, noting that when he visited his dying father there in 1931, he "kept his feet off the floor; rats and cockroaches scurried incessantly across the floors of the hospital" (p. 107). Moran does not let hospital personnel off

the hook, however. Citing a 1930 grand jury report, Moran writes, "Thanks to bad leadership in nearly every department, Grady suffered 'unsanitary conditions, waste of supplies, excessive prices paid for drugs and foods, [and] indifference to complaints'" (p. 111).

Moran balances accounts of Grady's problems with biographical sketches of a diverse array of medical and civic heroes who fought for the hospital and its patients. Researchers will find these sketches useful when seeking information on subjects who spent time at Grady. A wealth of historical photographs—professional portraits, staged and candid hospital pictures, and photographs of facilities—will also broaden the appeal of Moran's thoroughly documented history.

San Jose State University

PATRICIA EVRIDGE HILL

The Dunning School: Historians, Race, and the Meaning of Reconstruction.

Edited by John David Smith and J. Vincent Lowery. Foreword by Eric Foner. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2013. Pp. xii, 325. \$40.00, ISBN 978-0-8131-4225-8.)

Once upon a time, Professor William A. Dunning and his students bestrode Reconstruction history like a colossus. Depicting a tragic era where northern radicals pressed tyranny and alien rule upon a white South, the Dunningites gave scholarly backing to conservatives who had pronounced emancipation at best a mixed blessing and black suffrage the quintessence of wickedness or folly. Academic tides have washed away all the Dunningites' preconceptions and most of their conclusions, and with it memory of the writers themselves. Now *The Dunning School: Historians, Race, and the Meaning of Reconstruction* restores the attention, even some of the credit, that they deserve.

More fitly titled "the Dunning Scholars," this essay collection highlights ten historians' lives and careers. It makes extremely useful points: that all of them began with preconceptions based on their upbringing and heritage, and that they had long, often impressive careers after their Columbia University dissertations appeared as books. All historians owe J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton an immense debt for the creation of the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, even those revising his take on Reconstruction North Carolina. Superseded though Charles W. Ramsdell's *Reconstruction in Texas* (New York, 1910) may be, his inspiration and encouragement for the History of the South series created works that, more than a half century on, include a few of the indispensables—and reflect Ramsdell's own leanings not at all. The Dunningites' views ranged from racial paternalism to Negrophobia; their attitudes on the Ku Klux Klan went from celebration of its members as freedom fighters to the outright denunciation of their violence in Paul Leland Haworth's book on the election of 1876—a stance that helped make him a virtual un-person among the Dunningites' most unbending white-liners. Most of the books had real value. They brought together basic facts and unearthed fresh materials. Many have not yet been fully replaced. Even John W. Burgess and Dunning himself combined insights and strong, dispassionate evaluations with malevolent fulminations: the

Copyright of Journal of Southern History is the property of Southern Historical Association and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.