

between 1940 and 1955 were unprecedented is untenable. Green's analysis is neither comparative nor significantly evaluative of relevant prior phenomena, as illustrated by the superficial chapter on music. Green ignores the nationalizing role of entertainment circuits and the leverage maintained by black unionized musicians during earlier periods when certain technological innovations in sound reproduction were not available.

While Green writes with a sense of certainty, he erroneously asserts that Chicago's Savoy Ballroom was a theater and that it and the Savoy Ballroom in New York were opened or owned by the Balaban and Katz corporation. Further, while the opening of the Parkway Ballroom in the 1940s no doubt offered some competition to the Regal Theater, Green's assertion that the structure rivaled the Regal, suggests that he does not understand the differences in the size and social function of these two institutions.

Other tenuous claims indicate that Green's book should be read with

caution. Throughout the book, Green references sociologist E. Franklin Frazier's *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939) and *Black Bourgeoisie* (1957) as the bases of characterizations Green claims to debunk. However, Green routinely misrepresents Frazier's ideas, ignoring, for example, Frazier's positive predictions regarding the black family, and confusing Frazier's views with those of sociologist, later Senator, Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Nonetheless, *Selling the Race* (particularly chapters one and three) is a useful contribution to existing histories of Black Chicago.

CLOVIS E. SEMMES is professor of African-American studies at Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti. He is author of *Cultural Hegemony and African-American Development* (1992); *Roots of Afrocentric Thought: A Reference Guide to Negro Digest/Black World, 1961-1976* (1998); and *The Regal Theater and Black Culture* (2006).



Rivers Revealed

Rediscovering America's Waterways

By Jerry M. Hay

(Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2007. Pp. 308. Illustrations, maps. \$19.95.)

When the Delta Queen Steamboat Company created the job of "Riverlorian," it made an important contribution to the field of public history. For over three decades, Delta Queen Riverlorians have entertained and edified passengers with their unique

blend of academic knowledge and hands-on expertise. Jerry Hay, a Floyd's Knobs, Indiana, river rat and longtime Delta Queen employee, has transcribed his enjoyable and respected oral presentations into this book about the role of the Ohio and

Mississippi valleys in American history and culture.

"*Rivers Revealed*," Hay begins, "offers a blend of river adventure stories with emphasis on the lessons I've learned from my mistakes, the sights I've seen, and the people I've met while boating. I've written this book while working aboard steamboats as a Riverlorian or traveling on my own paddle wheel houseboat" (p. 2). Hay's lifetime growing up along and sailing America's western rivers is evident on every page of this book. So too is his knowledge of folklore and his skill at storytelling.

Although chapter 22 is entitled "Potpourri," the book's previous twenty-one chapters also reflect this methodology. After relating his boyhood fascination with rivers ("Boy in a Johnboat"), Hay takes the reader on a route as meandering and, at times, as fascinating as the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. Navigation advice ("Reading the River," "River Guide Books," "Navigable River Know-how") precedes and follows human-interest stories ("Rescue from a Dock," "Gilligan the Goose," "Grand Excursion 2004," and "The Great Duck Race"), which are interspersed with historical essays ("The Evolution of Riverboats," "River Royalty") and a glossary ("Language of the Rivers"), which is juxtaposed with a transcribed folktale ("The Ghost of the Mary Greene"), combined with eclectic riveriana ("Top Ten River Towns," "Steamboat Passengers," "The Restless River"), and the telling of various personal river experiences

("Canoeing Misadventures," "Bizarre River Experiences," "Nine Days on a Towboat"), and more. There is no chronological or topical organization.

Hay writes well; his prose flows along the book's winding course. Ordinarily, one would assume that a collection like this was composed of previously published newspaper and magazine articles, but this does not appear to be the case. Hay has been telling many of these stories for years on the *Delta Queen*, *Mississippi Queen*, and *American Queen*, and on the several PBS, National Geographic, and History Channel television programs that appear on his crowded resume. In *Rivers Revealed*, Hay's oral tales are served up in lively prose.

"River travel allows us to see a part of our world that few people experience," write Jerry Hay. "It is my hope that anyone reading this book will never look at the river the same way again" (p. 2). River historians, folklorists, and buffs will enjoy and learn from *Rivers Revealed: Rediscovering America's Waterways*. It can sit on the shelf, ready for reading in long or short installments.

MICHAEL ALLEN is professor of history and American Studies, University of Washington, Tacoma. His books include *Western Rivermen, 1763-1861: Ohio and Mississippi Boatmen and the Myth of the Alligator Horse* (1990), *A Patriot's History of the United States*, co-authored with Larry Schwikart (2004), and *Congress and the West, 1783-1787* (forthcoming).