

sharing personal stories can lead to a collective movement. But she offers few predictions. Forty workers had the courage to come forward in a hostile environment. Now, with the USW's statement of support for LGBTQ rights, a strategic and coordinated "coming-out" campaign may be possible. First, get this book out to local unions and LGBTQ organi-

zations—and to their allies in the struggle for civil and human rights.

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### *Bluegrass Renaissance: The History and Culture of Central Kentucky, 1792-1852*

Edited by James C. Klotter and Daniel Rowland

(Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012. Pp. 400. Notes, illustrations, index. \$40.00.)

*Bluegrass Renaissance* consists of thirteen essays written by an eclectic group of scholars. Editors James Klotter, the state historian of Kentucky, and Daniel Rowland, a scholar in the University of Kentucky's history department, deserve credit for producing an impressive work. The well-crafted and well-researched essays illuminate the unique culture that flourished in the Central Bluegrass region during the antebellum era. Individuals who research and teach Kentucky history in the state's universities and public schools will find in these chapters a wealth of information and insight to share with their classes.

Klotter's opening essay, "Central Kentucky's 'Athens of the West' Image in the Nation and in History," portrays Lexington in the early 1800s, when it

was a swiftly growing city equipped with private schools, thriving businesses, and numerous cultural opportunities. Flying in the face of the city's progressive image, however, was the brutality of child labor and black slavery. Klotter points out that Lexington declined by the mid-1830s as a result of a stagnating economy, a devastating cholera epidemic, and the growing use of steamboats for travel and commerce. No large river ran past Lexington for the steamboats to ply. The essay deftly captures both the positive and negative features of life in the region.

Lexington was also home to Transylvania University, established in 1780. Mollie Eblen, a Transylvania University public relations officer, and Tom Eblen, a Lexington newspaper columnist, trace in their

essay the growth of the university into a respected institution of higher learning during the early antebellum period under the leadership of Connecticut-born and Yale-educated Horace Holley. Urbane and broad-minded, Holley brought energy and vision to his work as president of Transylvania. His efforts resulted in a sharp increase in enrollment in the law and medical schools and in the development of a superb faculty. Holley turned out to be too open-minded for influential Presbyterian trustees who regarded his Unitarian beliefs as a threat to their Calvinist orthodoxy, and he also became branded as a wealthy leader of an increasingly exclusive institution when university officials were forced to raise tuition during an economic decline. Holley's resignation caused Transylvania University's reputation to spiral downward as the Civil War approached. The Eblens' chapter stands out as especially interesting and well-written even in a volume full of excellent contributions.

Slavery, of course, figures prominently in many of the volume's essays. Historians of Kentucky slavery should take note of Gerald L. Smith's chapter "Slavery and Abolition in Kentucky," which argues that "slavery and antislavery sentiments evolved simultaneously in Kentucky" (p. 76). The state was home to few abolitionists, Smith writes, but a significant portion of Kentuckians considered slavery objectionable for numerous reasons. He asserts that slave patrols,

which roamed the countryside seeking to control and punish any slave who managed to avoid white surveillance, represented a vital method by which order was brought to a slave society while highlighting simultaneously the difficulty of maintaining a system of human bondage. "Ironically, in the end," writes Smith, "the slave patrol was an agency for both abolitionist and proslavery advocates in Kentucky" (p. 90). Smith's essay explores the "ongoing tug-of-war" (p. 76) that emerged over slavery in Kentucky, a struggle not seen in many southern states where slavery met little resistance.

Other illuminating chapters in *Bluegrass Renaissance* delve into topics—including music, painting, architecture, and the early horse industry—bound to interest scholars in a number of different fields related to antebellum Kentucky. The book lacks a bibliography, but the footnotes at the end of each chapter alert the reader to pertinent sources. *Bluegrass Renaissance* is an exemplary book, a credit to its publisher. The essays within its covers add to our understanding of the antebellum cultural milieu that made the Bluegrass frontier an exciting and unique region.

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