

Virginia Reviews

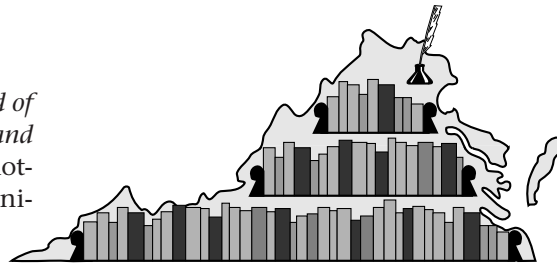
Reviews prepared by staff members of the Library of Virginia
Sara B. Bearss, Editor



Kevin J. Hayes. *The Mind of a Patriot: Patrick Henry and the World of Ideas*. Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2008. ix + 184 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0-8139-2758-9. \$22.95 (hardcover).

This small, moderately priced volume is the most original and most important contribution to understanding Patrick Henry to be published in many years. Kevin J. Hayes, who is the most able student of Virginia's colonial literary culture, closely examined all of the evidence that is available on the sadly neglected topic of Patrick Henry's reading habits. For too long, Henry has been perceived as Thomas Jefferson portrayed him, as an intuitive, poorly educated genius without deep knowledge of history and literature or even of the law, his chosen profession. The author of *The Mind of a Patriot* dispels that myth through a close analysis of Henry's reading habits.

A very valuable portion of the book is an appendix of nearly forty pages that lists the titles of all of the books that Henry is known to have owned or read. From that basic information and a reexamination of Henry's life and career, the author demonstrates that Henry was much better-read than any of his previous biographers had understood and that Henry's reading, a form of self-education, supported his great natural abilities to make him one of the preeminent men of Revolutionary Virginia and of the American Revolution.



If descriptions of Sally Hemings are accurate, she looked much like her elder half-sister Martha.

GORDON-REED REVIEW

Patrick Henry knew his British and ancient history, his Bible, his Shakespeare, and his geography. He also knew his law, and he read and wrote poetry. The Patrick Henry that Kevin Hayes introduces to readers of *The Mind of a Patriot* is a well-rounded professional and family man of unusual oratorical talents who was also a reader and student, a man whose mind was as impressive as his natural abilities.

—reviewed by Brent Tarter, editor,
Dictionary of Virginia Biography



Annette Gordon-Reed. *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008. 798 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0-393-06477-3. \$35.00 (hardcover).

In *Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: An American Controversy*

(1997), Annette Gordon-Reed presented the strong case that Thomas Jefferson had a long-term intimate relationship with his slave Sally Hemings. Gordon-Reed's second book on the subject, *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family*, is a detailed effort to take a much closer look at that relationship and the intertwined lives of those around it. This volume received the 2008 National Book Award for Nonfiction.

The Hemingses starts not with Sally Hemings but with Elizabeth Hemings, daughter of a white ship's captain and an African mother. A slave of the Virginia planter John Wayles, Elizabeth Hemings bore him several children, including Sally Hemings. Sally became the property of Thomas Jefferson shortly after his marriage to Martha Wayles Skelton, John Wayles's widowed daughter. If descriptions of Sally Hemings are accurate, she looked much like her elder half-sister Martha. Gordon-Reed carefully constructs a description of what a young Sally Hemings's life at Monticello may have been like.

Even before Sally Hemings and

Sara B. Bearss is senior editor of the Dictionary of Virginia Biography, published by the Library of Virginia. She has greatly enjoyed her time in the review editor's chair and would like to thank her colleagues for their cogent reviews and the readers of Virginia Libraries for their thoughtful comments and suggestions over the years.

Thomas Jefferson became intimate, the Hemingses received special privileges both at Wayles's plantation and at Monticello. Robert and James Hemings were given better training in a trade and were later essentially freed by Jefferson. James traveled to Paris with Jefferson when the latter became minister to France. It was while Jefferson was in France that Sally arrived as the companion and caretaker of Jefferson's younger daughter Polly. While in Paris, Jefferson and Hemings began the relationship that lasted for the rest of his life. On their return to Monticello Sally and the other Hemingses benefited from this relationship. Her children by Jefferson and her other relatives often received special privileges, and the slaves freed in Jefferson's will were all Hemingses.

Gordon-Reed draws on private and public records to illustrate as well as possible what life for Sally and the other Hemingses was like. Gordon-Reed's work is based on conjecture, and she admits that there is no way of knowing exactly what occurred either in Paris or at Monticello, but her suppositions are based on the records available and drawn from them, as opposed to the suppositions being made and the records contorted to fit them. Meticulously researched and well-presented, *The Hemingses of Monticello* is a fine addition to any serious Jefferson scholar's library, whether that scholar concurs with Gordon-Reed's conclusions or not.

—reviewed by Trenton E. Hizer, senior finding aids archivist



Alice Davis Wood. *Dorothea Dix and Dr. Francis T. Stribling: An Intense Friendship: Letters, 1849–1874*. Waynesboro, Va.: Galileo Gianiny Publishing, 2008. 155 pp. ISBN-13: 978-1-4257-9791-1. \$29.99 (hardcover). ISBN-13: 978-1-4257-9784-3. \$19.99 (softcover). Avail-

able print-on-demand from Xlibris Corporation at <http://www.xlibris.com>.

Dr. Francis T. Stribling served as superintendent of Virginia's Western Lunatic Asylum (after 1894, Western State Hospital) before, during, and after the Civil War. Alice Davis Wood wrote a brief biography in 2004. While researching *Dr. Francis T. Stribling and Moral Medicine*, Wood transcribed correspondence between Stribling and Dorothea Dix, the nineteenth-century crusader for America's mentally ill, that is housed in the records of Western State Hospital in the archives collection at the Library of Virginia and at the Houghton Library, Harvard University. This compilation of twenty-five transcribed letters between the two reformers is a continuation of the author's study of Stribling's life.

An Intense Friendship begins with brief biographical sketches of Dix and Stribling. Wood writes about Dix's childhood and the strained relationship with her family, highlights Dix's brief teaching career, and focuses on the event that spurred Dix into fighting for better treatment of the insane throughout the United States, her experience teaching Sunday school for the female inmates at East Cambridge Jailhouse. Through the aid and assistance of respected physicians she worked with state legislators to change treatments administered and where patients were housed. It was through her attempts to focus the nation's attention on the plight of the mentally ill that she met Dr. Francis T. Stribling.

Wood devotes a chapter to Stribling's career, and more information about him and his work can be found in *Dr. Francis T. Stribling and Moral Medicine*. Stribling's contribution to the treatment of the insane in antebellum Virginia cannot be overstated. In addition to improving the treatment of the mentally impaired at Western State, he was

involved in the creation of Northwestern Hospital, which evolved into The Hospital for the Insane in the new state of West Virginia, and in establishing the first hospital in Virginia for the mentally ill within the state's African-American population.

The letters featured in this publication cover a variety of subjects, including Dix's visits with the Stribling family, the Superintendent's Association (an association of the American Psychiatric Society), controversial policy decisions made by the Superintendent's Association, and Dix's work to build new hospitals for the mentally ill. Wood also prints Civil War correspondence between Dix and Frank Stribling, Francis Stribling's son, who was a Union prisoner of war at Point Lookout in Maryland. In 1858 Dix visited several hot springs while traveling from Staunton, Virginia, to Nashville, Tennessee, and letters written to her friends during this time have been transcribed as well.

An Intense Friendship provides readers with access to letters written by Dix and Stribling that are not otherwise readily available to researchers or readers. This compilation fills a niche for researchers of Virginia history, American history, and American medical history.

—reviewed by Cassandra Britt Farrell, map specialist and senior research archivist



Michael Dennis. *The New Economy and the Modern South*. Working in the Americas Series. Richard Greenwald and Timothy J. Michin, series eds. Gainesville, Tallahassee, and Tampa: University Press of Florida, 2009. xii + 346 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0-8130-3291-7. \$75.00 (hardcover).

Forty-five years ago, the historian George B. Tindall published an influential scholarly essay

entitled "Business Progressivism: Southern Politics in the Twenties." Its thesis was that unlike in much of the rest of the United States, Progressivism in the South was intended to promote business and industrial development, not social reform. One of its prime exemplars was Harry Flood Byrd, governor of Virginia from 1926 to 1930. The one-party politics, low taxes, minimal regulation of business, and anti-organized-labor policies that dominated Virginia's public policy for decades after Byrd's rise to power continued in modified form into the final years of the century. This new study, in spite of its regional title, is largely about late twentieth-century Virginia, and it subjects the modern version of business progressivism to a searching critique.

Virginia became a two-party state during the 1990s, but majorities of both parties bought into the free market, limited government, low-tax ethos that became popular throughout the United States during the 1980s. Public policies of governors of both parties and of majorities in both houses of the General Assembly favored business interests and even to some extent muted the voices of liberal reform and social conservatism. They also, if Michael Dennis is correct, failed to calculate the fiscal and social benefits and costs. He found that the consequences of the state's commitment to the free market political economy produced a statewide loss of jobs and a replacement of lost jobs with poorly paying jobs, a widening of the income gap between rich and poor, and alienation and hardship among the working poor. If, as often happened, corporations failed to meet commitments entered into after receiving large incentives to relocate to Virginia, the state lost money, jobs, and revenue. And by spending to attract businesses that did not in the long run always pay

their way, the state deprived itself of resources to improve its educational and public health services, meet its transportation needs, and improve the standard of living of its working population.

This is a stern assessment of the kind to which business progressivism in Virginia has not often been subjected since its introduction in the 1920s. As such, even at its high price tag of \$75, *The New Economy and the Modern South* may make an important and valuable contri-

**These personal accounts
of Monacan life ...
reveal how deeply,
although quietly,
they resented the
discrimination....**

WHITLOCK REVIEW

bution to any future discussions about the propriety of continuing or modifying the public policies of Virginia and the other Southern states.

—reviewed by Brent Tarter, editor,
Dictionary of Virginia Biography



Rosemary Clark Whitlock. *The Monacan Indian Nation of Virginia: The Drums of Life*. Contemporary American Indian Studies. J. Anthony Parades, series ed. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2008. xix + 221 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0-8173-1615-0. \$45.00 (hardcover). ISBN-13: 978-0-8173-5488-6. \$24.95 (softcover).

Historically, the Monacan Indians resided between the Blue Ridge Mountains and the fall line in Virginia, although many members of the Monacan Nation have

moved away since the nineteenth century. Their cultural center is at Bear Mountain, in Amherst County, where members of the nation annually gather and where the author, who is a member of the nation although resident in South Carolina, interviewed about two dozen elders, leaders, and young people in the 1990s. From those interviews, she compiled their life histories, preserving details about and insights into Monacan rural life in the twentieth century.

Under Virginia's 1924 Act to Preserve Racial Integrity, which defined all people in the state as either "white" or "colored," the Monacan were officially classified as "colored" and subjected to all of the racial discrimination laws of the Jim Crow period, including being excluded from public schools. An Episcopal Church mission furnished elementary education for Monacan children and also provided a center of community life. Even after the laws requiring racial segregation were invalidated or repealed, Monacan children still faced racial discrimination. The county school system refused for several years to allow them to attend school, and later some bus drivers refused to stop and pick them up. White students, reflecting racial attitudes of the time, sometimes shunned Monacan students.

These personal accounts of Monacan life in the twentieth century exhibit the close-knit family life and sense of community that the Monacan shared with one another. They also reveal how deeply, although quietly, they resented the discrimination, particularly the overbearing and insensitive falsification of their birth and marriage records by Walter Ashby Plecker, the longtime director of the state's bureau of vital statistics whose ethnic cleansing of public records denied legal recognition to all of Virginia's Indians

and imposed severe hardships on Indian as well as African-American residents of Virginia.

The cumulative effect of this series of personal narratives is instructive and moving.

—reviewed by Brent Tarter, editor,
Dictionary of Virginia Biography



Brian J. Daugherty and Charles C. Bolton, eds. *With All Deliberate Speed: Implementing Brown v. Board of Education*. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2008. xvi + 339 pp. ISBN-13: 978-1-55728-868-4. \$64.95 (hardcover). ISBN-13: 978-1-55728-869-1. \$24.95 (softcover).

The twelve essays in this collection analyze how African-Americans in ten states and two cities influenced attempts to implement or block implementation of the two *Brown v. Board of Education* decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States. The first, in 1954, declared that mandatory racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional; the second, in 1955, required that states that had maintained racially segregated public schools desegregate them “with all deliberate speed.” In fact, in most states, and in all of the states of the Old South, white political leaders employed various legal and political tactics to resist enforcement of desegregation, proceeding, as it were, with all deliberate delay.

This volume treats the states of Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia and the cities of Las Vegas, Nevada, and Milwaukee, reminding readers that desegregation was a national, not merely a regional, problem. These essays demonstrate that each state’s official response was different, and in each state the role of African-Americans was also different.

In Virginia, coeditor Brian J. Daugherty focuses on the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Virginia had the largest state chapter in the country, and its leadership and the civil rights attorneys in Virginia (Oliver W. Hill, Henry Marsh, Spottswood Robinson, and Samuel W. Tucker, to single out the best-known) worked well with W. Lester Banks, executive director of the Virginia NAACP, and Thurgood Marshall, chief counsel for the national

**More than in any
other state, the civil
rights movement in
Virginia had litigation
at its heart....**

DAUGHERTY AND BOLTON REVIEW

NAACP, to guide the effort to desegregate the state’s public schools in the face of determined resistance from the state’s Democratic Party leadership. More than in any other state, the civil rights movement in Virginia had litigation at its heart, and it had deep and powerful leadership and support at the community level in many parts of the state. Daugherty’s many detailed citations to original sources and the scholarly literature give weight to his portrayal of the NAACP strategy in Virginia, which is one of the most impressive reform efforts in all of the state’s history.

—reviewed by Brent Tarter, editor,
Dictionary of Virginia Biography



Lauranett L. Lee. *Making the American Dream Work: A Cultural History of African Americans in Hopewell, Virginia*. Hampton, Va.: SPS Press

Publishing, 2008. 252 pp. ISBN-13: 978-1-60037-466-1. \$29.95 (hardcover).

Oral histories provide a unique perspective for studying and understanding the past as historical events are examined through the eyes of those who lived through them. In *Making the American Dream Work: A Cultural History of African Americans in Hopewell, Virginia*, Lauranett L. Lee, curator of African-American history at the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond, tells the story of Hopewell’s black population during the civil rights era through their own words. Interviews with the town’s residents render fascinating accounts of how they challenged legal and cultural racial obstacles, while Lee contextualizes their local stories within the larger history of the African-American experience in the United States.

The first, and briefer, section of the book includes a short history of slavery’s origins in this country, along with a description of slave life related to such topics as religion, control exercised by slaveholders, resistance, plantation mistresses, gender, and recreation. Also included in this part are detailed descriptions of eight historic sites in Hopewell: Kippax Plantation, Weston Manor, Appomattox Manor, City Point Historic District, City Point National Cemetery, Beacon Theatre, the Downtown Hopewell Historic District, and the Hopewell Municipal Building.

The second section of *Making the American Dream Work*, which makes up most of the book, consists of transcriptions of ten interviews Lee conducted in the spring and summer of 2005. The interviewees include a Prince Edward County teacher who recalls her life growing up in Hopewell during the Jim Crow era; a clergyman who emphasizes how important grandparents and extended family members were to African-Amer-

ican households; a minister who moved to Hopewell after twenty-four years in the military and who discusses racial issues in a context of international attitudes; a long-time volunteer to many service organizations; a recreation teacher striving to teach subsequent generations; and a mother and daughter who describe their experiences as a teacher and a student on the front lines of school desegregation.

Especially interesting are the recollections of the Reverend Curtis Harris, who sat on the city council and was Hopewell's first elected African-American mayor, and his wife, Ruth, who were both active in the civil rights movement. Their son Kenneth Harris comments on the town's race relations after he returned from military service in Vietnam. Lee also interviewed two white citizens: a librarian at the Appomattox Regional Library provides a rich overview of Hopewell's local history, while a native South Carolinian recalls encounters between civil rights activists and members of the Ku Klux Klan.

Lee includes an informative bibliography of important scholarship on African-American history and culture, oral history volumes related to segregation and the civil rights movement, and a list of Virginia repositories that contain relevant primary source materials, such as the Library of Virginia, the Appomattox Regional Library System, the Virginia Historical Society, and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

—reviewed by John G. Deal, editor,
Dictionary of Virginia Biography



Linwood Holton. *Opportunity Time: A Memoir*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008. xiii + 226 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0-8139-2720-6. \$27.95 (hardcover).

In 1969 Virginia elected its first Republican governor since Recon-

struction. Abner Linwood Holton, a native of Big Stone Gap, won the gubernatorial race and in doing so helped firmly reestablish Virginia's two-party system. *Opportunity Time* is Holton's memoir. It is an honest, forthright, funny, educational, and informative discussion of his work with Virginia's Republican Party, his four-year term as governor, his family, and his life.

Holton's passion for Republican Party politics developed at a very early age. Raised by loving parents, Holton graduated from high school

He is extremely proud of the role his family played in integrating Virginia's public school system....

HOLTON REVIEW

as the United States was becoming involved in World War II. He attended Washington and Lee University, joined the navy, and was accepted into Harvard Law School, a feat that the governor admits with humor was a fortunate event, especially because he barely met Harvard Law School's admission requirements. After law school Holton moved to Roanoke, where he practiced law and became involved in Virginia's Republican Party. His goal, as that of many other Virginia Republicans, was to create a two-party political system.

Holton succinctly describes key issues supported by progressive Republicans such as the repeal of the state's poll tax as a prerequisite for voting, strengthening absentee-voting laws to prevent voting in state elections by former Virginia residents, and lowering the voting age to eighteen. As Holton points out, any strides Republicans made in the 1950s were temporarily set

back by Virginia's response of Massive Resistance to the Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*. By the 1960s Virginia Republicans were progressively winning more votes. After his failed bid for the governor's office in 1965, Holton immediately began his campaign for the 1969 gubernatorial race. President Richard M. Nixon joined him on the campaign trail, and his support, along with the coalition of voters the unified Republican Party put together that year, contributed to Holton's victory. With candid descriptions and blunt opinion mixed with humor, Holton describes his term as Virginia's governor. He is extremely proud of the role his family played in integrating Virginia's public school system while he served in public office.

Many readers will find Holton's descriptions of key Republican leaders such as Presidents Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, Senator John Warner, and New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller engaging and enlightening. Of particular interest to many will be his thoughts on the Republican Party's "Southern Strategy." For those who are not political junkies, beware: Holton makes twentieth-century Virginia politics interesting.

—reviewed by Cassandra Britt Farrell, map specialist and senior research archivist



Roger Mudd. *The Place to Be: Washington, CBS, and the Glory Days of Television News*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2008. xv + 413 pp. ISBN-13: 9781586485764. \$27.95 (hardcover).

In the decades before the Internet and twenty-four-hour news outlets such as CNN, Americans got their news from newspapers, radio, and the network television stations of CBS, NBC, and ABC. When television emerged as

a dominant medium during the 1960s, the nightly network news-casts provided what newspapers and radio could not: motion pictures to accompany the reporting and analysis of the day's events. In *The Place to Be: Washington, CBS, and the Glory Days of Television News*, Roger Mudd describes an era unmatched in today's media world in which one network bureau dominated the dissemination of news for almost two decades. While examining CBS News during the 1960s and 1970s, he deftly intertwines his own story as one of the network's most important correspondents.

Mudd, who has lived with his family in McLean, Virginia, for more than three decades, began his career at the *Richmond News Leader* and later at the newspaper's radio station WRNL. By 1961 he was at CBS News, where he became the network's chief correspondent on Capitol Hill and later Walter Cronkite's chief substitute in the nightly news anchor chair. When management selected Dan Rather as Cronkite's permanent replacement in 1980, Mudd resigned, feeling he had been treated poorly by CBS. He took a job at rival NBC, where he later anchored the network's *Nightly News* program.

While Mudd's personal story shapes the narrative, *The Place to Be* is largely a history of CBS News during a golden age in television journalism. Through fifty-one short chapters Mudd writes in an

easy-to-digest, conversational style about why the Washington bureau (rather than New York) was the center of the news universe and how CBS covered the era's major stories, including the Cuban Missile Crisis; the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King; the civil rights movement; Vietnam; and Watergate. Mudd relates many

**A bit surprising, his
observations and
opinions sometimes
are negative and even
a bit gossipy....**

MUDD REVIEW

amazing stories of how correspondents gathered news and presented it on the air. In our age of instant worldwide communication, his reminiscences of the laborious process of news gathering, such as physically flying film to New York for processing and editing, will no doubt astound younger readers. As only an insider can, Mudd insightfully illustrates what made CBS so successful during these years, from the on-air and behind-the-scenes talent to an atmosphere that was at once collegial but also extremely competitive as correspondents

vied to have their stories aired on Cronkite's news broadcasts. This internal competitiveness, as well as a strong desire to beat out NBC and ABC, made CBS News that much stronger and instilled in the organization more than a bit of a swagger.

Very candid about his own and others' successes and failures, Mudd provides brief background sketches of the major and minor players at CBS during these years, including such notables as Eric Sevareid, Daniel Schorr, and Dan Rather. Beyond simple descriptions, Mudd characterizes their often-prickly personalities. A bit surprising, his observations and opinions sometimes are negative and even a bit gossipy, especially concerning their private lives and internal newsroom politics.

The Place to Be: Washington, CBS, and the Glory Days of Television News is a must-read for those interested in news gathering and broadcast media. In true journalistic fashion Mudd not only depended on his own (no doubt) superb memory but also conducted recent interviews with many of the major subjects and consulted memoirs by others. This approach, along with Mudd's wit and candor, elevates *The Place to Be* far beyond most autobiographical and journalistic works.

—reviewed by John G. Deal, editor, *Dictionary of Virginia Biography* VI