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Floridian of His Century: The Courage of Governor LeRoy Collins
by Martin A. Dyckman

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story? Can this story be told without talking about race? Does it matter that there were no African American artists in any of the art history books at the time the Highwaymen began painting with Backus? Monroe seems to think not.

The twenty-six pages of text are not well organized and are sometimes vague and uninformed. The author could have given us far more insight into the man and his artwork by drawing more carefully on his own earlier work and the scholarship, exhibitions, and films on the Highwaymen that have been completed in the last several years. The book has no bibliography, and there does not seem to be any attempt on the author's part to curate the paintings in the book in chronological order or in any other manner that would have given us a new perspective on the artist. Still, many of the paintings are delicious. In fact, the best insight we get about Newton in this book is from looking at the reproductions of his work, which are superbly photographed and presented. Newton did portray light beautifully.

In spite of some stunning images of Newton's paintings, Monroe is not convincing when he says that this artist's "paintings provided the measure of excellence that the other artists could only dream of achieving" (3). And Monroe's claim that the story of the Highwaymen is "the last great untold tale of modern Florida" (preface) is simply mind-boggling—try convincing Carl Hiaasen of that! Comments like this make it hard to take the author seriously.

Nonetheless, *Harold Newton: The Original Highwayman* is useful because it presents a Florida artist who painted Florida as longtime Floridians understand it. And for serious collectors and historians of Florida art, the paintings make it a book worthy of a place on the bookshelf.

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Floridian of His Century: The Courage of Governor LeRoy Collins. By Martin A. Dyckman. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006. xii, 332 pp. Series foreword, acknowledgments, photographs, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 cloth).

Martin Dyckman's *Floridian of His Century* provides a journalist's reflections on LeRoy Collins, Florida's most important governor of the twentieth century. Dyckman briefly chronicles Governor Collins's formative years and initial foray into politics during the Great Depression and Second World War, before turning to his main subject, Collins's gubernatorial career. Highlighted as a matter of course are Collins's battles with the Florida legislature over reapportionment and his management of crises brought on in Florida--and, consequently, in his own political career--by the struggle for racial equality in the United States. The story of Collins's

postgubernatorial activities is handled in terms of the 1960 Democratic national convention, chaired by Governor Collins; his stormy tenure as head of the National Association of Broadcasters; his career-breaking position as President Lyndon Baines Johnson's director of the Community Relations Service, and his last, badly managed, 1968 campaign for George Smathers's seat in the U.S. Senate.

Dyckman provides a more comprehensive perspective on Governor Collins than anything previously available to readers and students of Florida history. While Tom Wag's pathbreaking 1985 study, *Governor LeRoy Collins of Florida: Spokesman of the New South*, remains a standard work, Dyckman develops the political campaigns waged by Governor Collins in 1954 and 1956 to a far greater degree than anything previously published. Dyckman is spot-on in his conclusion that these campaigns were the most pivotal in Florida's history, particularly given the gubernatorial alternatives of Charlie Johns and Sumter Lowry during the daunting, racially charged political atmosphere of the mid- to late 1950s.

Drawing on a long career as a journalist for the *St. Petersburg Times*, Dyckman heavily employs his stock in trade: the interview. While Dyckman has consulted most written works on Florida history and the people and events of Collins's era, and has culled a fair amount of material from the Collins papers deposited at the Florida State University, the University of South Florida, as well as the State Archives, his writing is largely informed by the oral histories he has collected. His perspective, too, is undoubtedly impacted by his own experiences as a young journalist living through the era that Governor Collins so greatly influenced and changed. Yet, Dyckman is willing to look beyond the aura created around Collins after his "moderate view on civil rights" was vindicated during and after the 1970s, and to point out Collins's struggles and failings.

While Dyckman quickly touches on Governor Collins's philosophy on good governance and the role of government in a chapter entitled "The Glory of Government," he does not develop this important aspect of Collins's career throughout the narrative. Though this represents a missed opportunity, as do the muted roles assigned in Dyckman's study to Spessard Holland and Dan McCarty, these are relatively small problems in such a good body of work.

The largest success of Dyckman's book is his tracing of LeRoy Collins's "courage" from Collins's early days as an advocate of the status quo, white-supremacist South, to his acknowledgment that segregation was not "morally" defensible, but probably not something that mere laws could change, to his active participation in attempting to heal the racial rift in American society. It was a journey taken by many Americans, but not many had to display their itinerary in such a public fashion as one of Florida's most public figures was required to—and chose to—do.

As a broader view of the most consequential politician of twentieth-century Florida, *Floridian of His Century* deserves a place on the shelves of any person interested in the tumultuous political history of Florida during the period of the 1950s and 1960s. Martin Dyckman has written a highly readable, insightful, and sometimes

challenging volume that treats LeRoy Collins as something more than the sainted figure he is sometimes portrayed as being. In Dyckman's narrative, Collins emerges instead as a real person, with his courageous character helping to overcome his flaws.

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Brutal Journey: The Epic Story of the First Crossing of North America. By Paul Schneider. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006. x, 366 pp. Introduction, maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, acknowledgments, index, \$26.00 cloth).

In July 1536, three Spanish men and a black Moroccan, all dressed like and accompanied by Indians, stumbled across a group of Spanish slavers in Mexico. After eight exhausting years, the Pánfilo de Narváez expedition had mercifully ended. This attempt by Spain to conquer Florida and the American Southeast began with four hundred well-armed men and unbridled optimism. When it ended, only these four men remained alive, thanks to little more than a combination of luck and their willingness to do anything to survive.

In this gripping and often compelling narrative, Paul Schneider reconstructs the harrowing story of the Narváez expedition. The journey—which began in Tampa Bay, hugged the Gulf coast to modern-day Texas before crossing to Mexico's western coast and South Sea—hardly lived up to expectations or the precedents established by Cortes and other conquistadors. The lone four survivors had traveled five thousand miles before they escaped their travails, and their journey could hardly be measured by the geographical distance they traveled. During their eight years as conquerors-turned-refugees, they “had become killers and cannibals, torturers and torture victims, slavers and enslaved. They became faith healers, arms dealers, canoe thieves, spider eaters, and finally . . . they became itinerant messiahs” (2). In short, their journey was physical, emotional, and psychological.

Brutal Journey creatively addresses the problem of sources that complicates all attempts to describe the early American interactions between Natives and Newcomers. In the case of the Narváez expedition, only two firsthand accounts exist. Álvaro Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca published the best-known version in 1542, and Spanish authorities in Spain and Hispaniola authored the second. Schneider treats both sources with suspicion as they were both written to justify actions that occurred after the fact. Schneider augments his close reading of translated versions of these sources with various archaeological findings and ethnohistorical studies of the region. He also relies heavily on studies of other expeditions in the Americas to provide indirect insights when the direct sources are silent.

In a few places, hyperbolic and unnecessary rhetoric in *Brutal Journey* detracts