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***Selling the Sunshine State: A Celebration of Florida Tourism Advertising***  
by Tim Hollis

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Indiana University, the book brings together a great deal of important and interesting information. Bean received a 2009 Gold Medal in nonfiction from the Florida Book Awards for his study, and he was profiled in the magazine of the Florida Humanities Council, *Florida Forum*, which published an excerpt from the book. The acclaim is well deserved.

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*Selling the Sunshine State: A Celebration of Florida Tourism Advertising.* By Tim Hollis (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008. 337 pp. Introduction, color illustrations, bibliography, credits, index. \$34.95, cloth)

To Florida residents, Sunshine State visitors, and Florida history scholars, advertising is an accepted feature of the state's past and present tourism industry. Tim Hollis explains that in previous Florida tourism advertising studies, analysis often overshadows imagery. He reverses this trend in *Selling the Sunshine State: A Celebration of Florida Tourism Advertising* by encouraging readers to view this work as "the most elaborate Florida vacation scrapbook ever assembled" (3). Hollis succeeds in this effort, and the postcards, publicity photos, travel brochures, souvenir placemats, and other Florida tourism trappings, many of which are from the author's personal collection, illustrate the colorful history of the state's evolving tourism industry. Readers also learn that the advertisements and attractions highlight what promoters wanted prospective visitors to believe they would experience when choosing Florida as their vacation destination.

The monograph's subtitle describes the work as a "Celebration of Florida Tourism Advertising," but Hollis also points out the transitory nature of certain tourism destinations like the Johnny Weissmuller–endorsed Tropical Wonderland, which proved unable to compete with Disney. Brochures and advertisements often imply nothing but glossy successes. The book's captions also reveal a different side to Florida, as interstate construction, larger theme parks, and other forms of development rendered some attractions, like Sanlando Springs, obsolete. Hollis briefly draws attention to another duality of Florida tourism advertising by including a sign for American Beach, the "Negro Ocean Playground" (130). An advertisement for "Paradise Park" encourages viewers to "See Florida's Silver Springs from Paradise Park for Colored People" (179). This imagery reminds readers that not everyone enjoyed equal access to Florida tourism.

After an overview and general introduction to the state's advertising in the first chapter, Hollis divides the book into regional sections that correspond with a 1966 Florida tourism guide. This guide sectioned Florida into seven different regions:

Miracle Strip, Big Bend, Florida's Crown, Grove Coast, Sun Coast, TropiCoast, and the Everglades and Paradise Islands. This structure is effective for both readers who focus on a specific region and those intrigued by the state as a whole. The chapter on the Sun Coast will be of particular interest to researchers of the Tampa Bay area. Hollis notes that the items used in the book "were, almost without exception, designed to sell the Sunshine State to nonresidents" (2), but this work will appeal to a broad audience of individuals who reside in or have ever traveled to Florida.

In keeping with his goal of telling "the story from a visual standpoint" (1), Hollis does not deeply analyze the images, but includes insightful and detailed captions that reiterate common advertising techniques. Two of the themes advertisers repeatedly used were the omnipresence of beautiful women in Florida and the superiority of Florida's weather and environment. Hollis also points out interesting facts that provide readers with more detailed background information about the images. For example, alongside a photograph of an early Florida welcome center, readers learn that Florida was the first state to introduce these centers along popular tourist routes. Some attention is given to the deceptiveness of certain advertisements, such as a postcard that depicted the Citrus Tower in Clermont as a bright orange color.

*Selling the Sunshine State* highlights the creativity of advertisers and artists who marketed Florida tourism in the pre-computer age. After finishing this nostalgic book, readers cannot help but feel that modern tourism advertising has lost much of the charm, cleverness, and originality that Hollis emphasizes in this collection of Florida tourism memorabilia. The author draws attention to a unique example featured on the cover of the "Official 1962 Florida State Road Department Map" (18), which shows an elaborate sand-sculpture outline of Florida with models perched on the sculpture engaging in different Florida tourism activities such as scuba diving, sunbathing, and golfing. Very little is known about many of the "anonymous geniuses" (2) who crafted images like these, but Hollis points out their significant role in developing Florida's tourism industry.

On a minor note, the captions could have been more helpful in assessing how Florida tourism evolved over time if more of them had included specific or approximate dates. Still, Hollis's book represents a major contribution to the preservation of important cultural artifacts that influenced popular perceptions about the state. Also, these unique images retain what Hollis describes as "drawing power" (2). The advertising introduced during this era of Florida tourism continues to lure millions of visitors to the state each year.

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