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***The Columbia Restaurant: Celebrating a Century of History,
Culture, and Cuisine* by Andrew T. Huse**

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desegregation following the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Karl and the other newly elected House members who would take office in 1957 sat in the audience. Although Orr was soundly defeated the next time he ran for reelection, his 1956 speech, which is included in the appendix of Karl's book, was an inspiration to the incoming freshmen. In Karl's words: "Jack Orr's integrity and eloquence set the tone for those of us at the threshold of legislative service. Frankly, it was an inspiration to many of us and helped us find our own courage when the emotionally charged issue of race relations forced many of us into situations similar to the one he had faced" (18-19).

MacKay suggests that the politics of bigotry was replaced in the 1970s by a politics of deception. Opportunistic politicians began to sell Floridians a "fairy tale" – the idea that Florida is uncomplicated and needs little from government. MacKay offers a blunt assessment of how this has played out: "Since the election of Reubin Askew, no candidates except Askew, Bob Graham, and Lawton Chiles have been able to be elected governor based on reality. To make matters worse, compromise was increasingly portrayed as less than honorable and a new fantasy, ideological purity, was becoming accepted in lieu of bipartisan, nonideological problem solving" (236).

Like Karl, MacKay stresses the value of putting principles first. For example, he explains that LeRoy Collins took positions on civil rights that probably cost him election to the U.S. Senate in 1968 but nevertheless served as a standard for others.

Of course, this is also true of Fred Karl and Buddy MacKay. Even when they lost elections, they won hearts.

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The Columbia Restaurant: Celebrating a Century of History, Culture, and Cuisine. By Andrew T. Huse with Recipes and Memories from Richard Gonzmart and the Columbian Restaurant Family (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009. vi, 314 pp. Acknowledgments, introduction, family tree, illustrations, color photographs, epilogue, subject index, recipe index. \$40.00, cloth)

The photograph that illustrates the cover of Andrew T. Huse's centennial history of Florida's historic Columbia Restaurant is powerful beyond words. Like military troops posed for inspection, almost two hundred employees and family members stand proudly before the historic façade of the Columbia Restaurant in Tampa's Ybor City. The assembled group of accountants, bartenders, busboys, cashiers, chefs, dishwashers, flamenco dancers, maitre d's, musicians, restroom attendants, singers, sommeliers, valets, waiters, sons, daughters, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren

form the backbone of a business that illustrates the twentieth-century history of Florida. In the early 1900s, the patriarch of the Columbia Restaurant, Casimiro Hernandez Sr., came to Tampa's Ybor City – an enclave of urban immigrants from Cuba, Italy, and Spain who worked in the district's cigar factories – and saw an opportunity that emanated from hunger.

Up and down the urban east coast – from New York's Lower East Side to Miami – immigrant men and women like Hernandez rented pushcarts and fruit stands, opened cafes, coffee houses, and saloons where their working-class compatriots could find both refreshment and the tastes of home. Inspired by a popular song of the day, "Columbia, Gem of the Ocean," Hernandez and a partner started the Columbia Café in 1905, offering hearty fare for the local workforce – Cuban sandwiches, strong coffee, sweet pastries, liquor, and cigars. In this richly illustrated volume, Huse sensitively documents the history of four generations of the entwined families who created the Columbia Restaurant.

As both a librarian and a culinary historian, Huse is well suited to write this family and business history. He understands the cultural and social history that lies within the food dynasty of the Columbia Restaurant. As he explains: "Restaurants are sensitive barometers of culture. The Columbia's history is not one of staid, changeless uniformity, but quite the opposite: to prosper, the restaurant has undergone nearly constant change, much like Florida" (ii). He integrates evocative photographs and ephemera from the Gonzmart-Columbia Restaurant Collection, now housed in the Special Collections Department at the University of South Florida Tampa Library, as well as interviews from the Columbia Restaurant oral history project, available through the library's online catalogue. One section of the volume includes favorite recipes from the Columbia Restaurant such as the "Original 1905 Salad," Spanish bean soup, arroz con pollo, and Sangre de Toro sangria.

Family is at the center of the Columbia Restaurant's history, and Huse uses it as a touchstone to move through the evolution of this Tampa institution. The book is divided into chronological sections associated with the four generations of the Hernandez-Gonzmart family, allowing the reader to explore the history of Tampa through the lens of food, labor, and the immigrant experience. As Huse explains, the Columbia Restaurant is "Ybor City's virtual axis, economically, culturally, and historically" (ii). The many-layered story that revolves around the Columbia involves the coming of the railroad, industrialization, tourism, Prohibition, the Florida land boom, organized crime, the Great Depression, the world wars, rationing, labor unions, baseball, and the culture of celebrity and entertainment. One of the most interesting stories told here is that of the Columbia Restaurant's dedicated and talented workforce. More detail about these workers would better reveal the complicated intersection of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and labor in the segregated South. Women play a central role in the history of the Columbia, and Huse does an excellent job documenting the strength, influence, and style of Adela Hernandez-Gonzmart and the generations of young women who followed in her path.

The Columbia Restaurant was the place to be seen in Tampa, and no more so than in the 1950s, as the illustrations chosen for this volume so vividly depict. This was the heyday of the glamorous floor show at the Columbia, of exotic dining in the Patio Room, and dancing in the Don Quixote Room to the music of Cesar Gonzmart's Continental Orchestra. Politicians, the State Elks Association, Hollywood movie stars, and hundreds of honeymooners and families on vacations made their way to the Columbia, including my own parents. My mother remembers enjoying a "very fancy" meal with my father, and taking home a matchbook and menu to mark their special evening in February 1947. I imagine them dining on one of the Columbia's specialties – pompano en papillot, paella Valenciana, or steak capuchina – and ending their meal with a creamy flan, a bowl of coconut ice cream, and a café con leche. The restaurant has never lost its appeal for those in love. In 2004, *Southern Living* magazine chose the Columbia as its "favorite romantic restaurant."

Perhaps because the events it documents occurred so recently, the last section of the volume, "The Fourth Generation, 1980-2005," lacks the historical context and analysis of the rest of the book. Although the final chapter feels a bit weighted down by family drama, these stories do reveal the challenges of running a family business. Each generation placed "family first" but also understood the heavy responsibility of being born into a restaurant family; and spouses learned what it meant to be married to the family business. Ultimately, this is the poignant story of an American family shaped by their Cuban and Spanish heritage and their love for the worlds and people of Florida, whom they so deeply touched through a magical creation of food and entertainment.

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Ditch of Dreams: The Cross Florida Barge Canal and the Struggle for Florida's Future. By Steven Noll and David Tegender. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009. xi, 394 pp. Foreword by Raymond Arsenault and Gary R. Mormino, introduction, maps, photographs, illustrations, appendix, acknowledgments, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95, cloth)

The story of the Cross Florida Barge Canal reads like an epic, a tale spanning centuries and filled with avarice, courage, determination, hubris, and a heroine out of central casting. Steven Noll and David Tegender leave no stone unturned in their outstanding rendering of this most peculiar episode of Florida's often-shameful environmental history. Theirs is a masterful work, a prodigiously researched account that serves as the final word on the subject. But the authors aim higher still, as they posit that "the history of the Cross Florida Barge Canal . . . is not just another story