Review

Reviewed Work(s): The Jim Crow Routine: Everyday Performances of Race, Civil Rights, and Segregation in Mississippi by Stephen A. Berrey

Review by: Leigh Anne Duck

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of approaches that we can bring to bear on food studies is a strength of the developing field, but it is also a limitation. Because the field crosses several disciplines, it does not have a clear academic home. Food studies in the academy most often aligns with behavioral studies and nutrition, but cultural studies of food are still seeking a place to fit within the Humanities. Clearly, a significant amount of scholarly and popular interest in African American food studies exists. It remains to be seen, however, if African American studies will ultimately embrace food studies.

Stephen A. Berrey. *The Jim Crow Routine: Everyday Performances of Race, Civil Rights, and Segregation in Mississippi.* Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2015. 352 pp. $29.95.

Reviewed by Leigh Anne Duck, University of Mississippi

The histories of "Jim Crow" and civil rights activism have been well studied, but this volume aims to intervene in the narrative frameworks that, in Berrey's account, "we usually encounter in public memory and even in the scholarship" (4). Noting that many studies focus on the early decades of segregation and disenfranchisement—a period of extreme violence and ever-increasing constraint as these systems were established—Berrey concentrates on later decades, by which point race relations had become embedded in an array of "routines" governing interaction and access to space. "Routine," of course, suggests regularity—the kinds of "everyday" exchanges that this volume seeks to illuminate—but it is also used to designate performances, carefully practiced forms of action and expression that can at any moment be revised. Accordingly, Berrey focuses not only on overt efforts to maintain a white supremacist social structure and the challenges to that structure, but also on what he calls "interracial intimacy." By this he means not deep personal knowledge of and among persons—indeed, the encounters he describes typically involved efforts to efface the personhood of African Americans—but shared experiences of and attunement to cultural expectations, toward which participating parties might feel very differently. "Jim Crow," he explains, "was a kind of theatrical production" in which white and black Mississippians had assigned lines, props, and stage directions, with accompanying (albeit differently inflected) vigilance for moments when others "did not follow the script" (219). Moving from the 1930s through the 1960s, when segregation per se was being dismantled in law and public space, Berrey describes how some of its effects and practices were already being reproduced in new ways. Berrey thus provides a narrative of U. S. racial history that is neither static nor triumphalist, and his account of how older forms of racial oppression yielded only amid an emphasis on newer ones should prove useful for the current moment—a period in which both scholars and citizens try to understand and confront the recalcitrance of racial injustice.

Scholars interested in performance studies are likely to be disappointed, as this volume does not engage substantively with theoretical work in that field. Aside from a couple of references to E. Patrick Johnson's *Appropriating Blackness: Performance and the Politics of Authenticity* (2003), Berrey relies on the models of sociologist Erving Goffman, who described self-presentation as a performance to be interpreted by others, and of political scientist James C. Scott, who examines the "transcripts"—public or hidden—through which dominant and subordinated groups follow or critically diverge from their socially prescribed roles. Berrey's first chapter, in particular, constitutes a kind of "thick description" of how Jim Crow was enacted—the often symbolic structures through which spaces were designated by race; the forms

of behavior expected or, for African Americans, mandated in such spaces; and the possibilities for and consequences of divergence from those expectations. But this empirical account, based chiefly on oral histories and social-science commentaries on Mississippi's race relations in the 1930s and '40s, nonetheless has the potential to deepen future intersections between scholars in history and those in literary and cultural studies. This chapter resonates powerfully, for example, with themes Brian Norman and Piper Kendrix Williams describe as central to literature concerning segregation: where some writers encode the spatialization of race as more absolute than is suggested by the more tenuous divisions in Berrey's archive (produced by curtains, lines of stools, and in one case, a symbolic stick), each volume foregrounds the tension created by threats and acts of violence, which may or may not emerge in the event of a cross-racial interaction that diverges from the Jim Crow script. (See Norman and Williams's Introduction to their edited collection, "To Lie, Steal, and Dissemble: The Cultural Work of the Literature of Segregation," in *Representing Segregation: Toward an Aesthetics of Living Jim Crow, and Other Forms of Racial Division* [2010].) Berrey ultimately understands narrative itself as a kind of performance, analyzing those found in newspapers and oral histories "on their own terms . . . separate from the events being described"; he considers how they exemplify "how blacks and whites made sense of" Jim Crow practices (63).

In his efforts to demonstrate intraracial variation in how white and black Mississippians narrate aggression, Berrey devotes considerable analysis to tendencies that in their broader contours will be familiar to many readers, but his goal is also to trace a shift that emerged as these regional narratives were increasingly displayed before national audiences. The stories Berrey describes from the 1930s and 1940s were neither subtle nor anonymous: protagonists were presented as relatively local and familiar, such that white Mississippians eager to demonstrate paternalist benevolence would distinguish "good" from "bad" representatives of both races, and African Americans would identify whites who engaged in vigilantism and sexual assault. But following responses to Emmett Till's murder and the acquittal of his killers, committed segregationists realized that the nation as a whole increasingly recoiled from racist violence. (Berrey does not ignore more legalistic turning points in the decline of Jim Crow, such as various U. S. Supreme Court decisions, but his emphasis on performance leads him to focus more on events that reveal or produce changed patterns of interpretation or differing contexts for enactment.) At this point, organizations like the Citizens' Councils and the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission—whose archives Berrey consults extensively—sought to limit obvious signs of white violence and the circulation of African American views. Thus began the development of linked surveillance networks that, unlike the "highly visible" practices of earlier decades (108), were more systematic and clandestine. Accordingly, the "ever-present tension" that Berrey earlier located in interactions between present and identifiable Mississippians of different races began to be experienced at all times by African American activists or those identified as such (who could, given the errors Berrey details, be any African American), who recognized that they might, at any moment, be unwittingly under surveillance (135).

In his final chapters, Berrey focuses chiefly on the performative and narrative strategies of segregationists, but his approach to these will be particularly interesting to readers seeking to understand connections between Jim Crow Mississippi and the contemporary U. S. To be clear, Berrey resists the idea of "Southern exceptionalism"—a singularly racist region in an otherwise racially liberal nation—throughout the volume; his focus on Mississippi seems to be driven by the goal of creating a manageable archive, though he also notes the state's prominence in national discussions of racism. During the civil rights movement, he argues, state officials sought to diminish that reputation by developing and enforcing ostensibly "race-neutral" laws and policies in their attempts to thwart activists—most often using variations of "breach of the peace," but also seeking to frame those who violated Jim Crow

norms for different infractions, such as peddling drugs or "unnatural" (homosexual) advances (161, 155). Meanwhile, segregationist organizations sought to align their racist narratives with those more prominent elsewhere in the country. Contrasting his focus with that of scholars who emphasize "massive resistance"—a campaign based on defiance—Berrey finds "adjustment and convergence" (178). While some organizations continued to argue that Jim Crow facilitated a kind of interracial harmony, others propagandized images of black criminality that would resonate with racist rhetoric in other regions—featuring carefully mobilized statistics or stoking fears of global anticolonial movements, for example.

In a brief epilogue, Berrey begins to suggest the stakes of these strategies, noting how politicians throughout the country have, since the 1960s, promoted law enforcement and mass incarceration. Apparently written just before the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement, this evocative account nonetheless suggests rich potential for research projects inspired by recent events. Contemporary analysis sometimes points to earlier forms of white supremacy, most notably identified with the U. S. South, by way of analogy, but Berrey, arguing that Jim Crow was always "a national racial system," suggests that certain of its narratives "have demonstrated a special ability to survive across periods of sweeping transformations," continuing to influence performances and policies (224, 230). This volume constitutes a significant resource for efforts to understand a history broader in chronological and spatial significance than is often assumed. Finally, Berrey's clear prose style and vivid examples render *The Jim Crow Routine* potentially useful for college students at all levels.

Devery S. Anderson. *Emmett Till: The Murder that Shocked the World and Propelled the Civil Rights Movement.* Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 2015. 552 pp. $40.00.

Reviewed by Philip C. Kolin, University of Southern Mississippi

Emmett Till scholar Christopher Metress declared, "No one knows more about this brutal murder and its contested legacy than Devery Anderson" (back-cover blurb). I agree. Anderson spent "over a decade of research" writing what is inarguably the definitive history of this fourteen-year-old black boy from Chicago who was kidnapped, tortured, and then murdered while visiting relatives in Mississippi in 1955 because he flirted with a white woman, twenty-one-year-old Carolyn Bryant, in her husband's grocery store. As a result, her enraged husband, Roy, and his half-brother, J. W. Milam, pistol-whipped Till's face, shot him in the head, tied his body to a seventy-five-pound cotton-gin fan, and threw it in the Tallahatchie River where it was found three days later. Equally shocking, the killers confessed their crimes to local authorities and were acquitted in two trials (for murder and a few weeks later for kidnapping) and bragged about their crimes in an article in *Look* magazine, further fueling the firestorm against civil rights atrocities in Mississippi.

Released on the sixtieth anniversary of Till's death, Anderson's magisterial history is rooted in his exhaustive archival research through newspapers, letters, minutes of meetings, FBI records, and the hard-to-locate 354-page murder trial transcript. Traveling frequently to the Delta and Chicago from his home in Salt Lake City, Anderson also interviewed Till's mother Mamie numerous times between 1994 and 2003; Till's great uncle, "Preacher" Moses Wright; cousins Wheeler Parker and Simeon Wright (the latter shared a bed with Till the night he was abducted); the district and defense attorneys; reporters covering the trials; townspeople; a host

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