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## Voice of the Wildcats: Claude Sullivan and the Rise of Modern Sportscasting

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wiles to induce her to conduct all her shopping at the American supermarket.

"Riqui" and his brother Carlo, both bilingual, are the family's ambassadors to American culture, but the boys are immersed in Cuban traditions and customs at home, cementing their heritage. A particularly entrancing account is provided of the family's excursion to Disney World to see "El Ratoncito Miguel". Though surrounded by American popular culture and excess, the mother insists on bringing Cuban food for their stay set to the endless beat of Cuban hits from the fifties and sixties.

The grandparents, especially, exert a strong influence on Richard, endowing him with an understanding of family connections and a way of life lost with their move to the States. From his abuelo's attempts to create a menagerie of farm animals at home, to his abuela's insistence he develop more manly interests and put aside his artistic, creative pursuits, the author portrays his internal struggle to please both his family and himself.

With his first job working at the Cuban grocery store, El Cocuyito, the memoir assumes a more somber tone as the author relates his struggles to understand and identify himself as gay in a culture that prizes masculinity. Conforming to family expectations, he consents to be the partner of the store cashier's daughter for her quincinera - a special celebration for a girl's fifteenth birthday. Participating in the festivities and serving as prince consort for the day allows him to bask in his family's approval. Friendships with a coworker and another Cuban refugee, however, help him to understand his preferences and appreciate both cultures which have shaped him, but also to assert his needs in finding his own way.

Spanish is liberally sprinkled throughout the book, but easily understood in context; enough to give the reader the experience of what it must have been like growing up bilingual when your family speaks one language and your adopted country another. Written with love and affection, the memoir is ultimately an homage to Richard Blanco's close-knit family and their indelible influence on who he is today.

*Melanie J. Dunn*

University of Tennessee, Chattanooga

**Voice of the Wildcats: Claude Sullivan and the Rise of Modern Sportscasting.** Alan Sullivan, with Joe Cox.

Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2014. ISBN

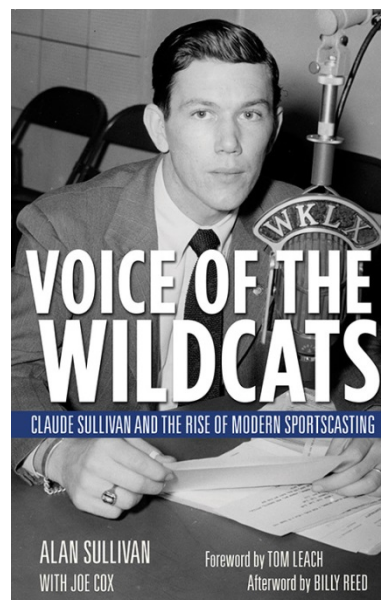
978-0-8131-4703-1 (hardcover: alk. paper);

ISBN 978-0-8131-4704-8(epub); 978-0-8131-4705-5 (pdf).

328 pages. \$29.95.

This brief memoir is a labor of love, written by Claude Sullivan's youngest son, a healthcare architect, an attorney and rabid Wildcats fan (author of *100 Things Wildcat Fans Should Know & Do Before They Die*). The focus of the

narrative is Sullivan's short life and career as the "Voice of the Wildcats" and the Wildcats basketball and football programs he covered. The work does not attempt comprehensive coverage of the "rise of modern sportscasting" but rather hints at broader changes based on anecdotal evidence of Sullivan's approach to the craft and business of reporting sports.



Sullivan was known for his colorful and engaging play-by-play commentary, but his painstaking, thorough pre-game preparations supported his seemingly spontaneous performances. There are some tidbits about and interesting photos of Sullivan's early and skilled use of various technologies, e.g., "mobile broadcasting" from his car, using ticker tape, calling games on radio based on live TV broadcasts or play-by-play telegraph messages issued from Madison Square Garden. He also invented several simple but functional pieces of equipment to aid in spotting or tracking players during games. He is credited with pioneering "coaches' programs," i.e., regular interview shows with coaches, now an integral part of sports news.

Sullivan's various endeavors represented his commitment to constructing the "hub and spokes" of a professional "wheel," continually adding different spokes so that his wheel would continue to spin even if one spoke should fail. He took extra gigs in radio drama and news reporting in the early days to supplement meager pay. Sullivan foresaw new possibilities in the business of sports as well and developed successful sports broadcast networks as a major spoke. He broadcast internationally for the Armed Services Network. He also organized international tour groups, broadcasting from Europe, Russia, and Middle East.

As a matter of personal and professional interest, Sullivan was one of the first Americans to visit the Soviet Union in 1956. He was shown alleged state of the art Soviet broadcasting equipment, which Sullivan found substandard compared to what he used daily in Louisville. Prior to a planned second trip to Russia in 1957 United States naval

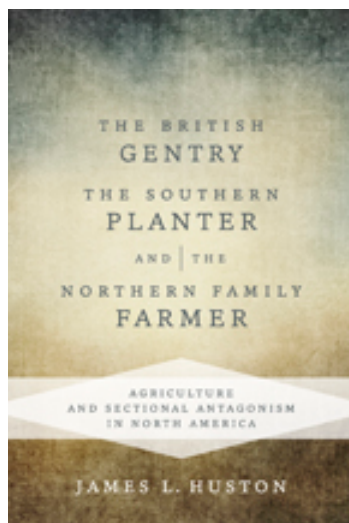
intelligence officers asked Sullivan to photograph a Soviet naval vessel *Aurora* if he could do so without risk; he narrowly escaped serious repercussions when his photographic foray was observed by Soviet officials.

A talented high school athlete and student, Sullivan had dreams of going to college on a basketball scholarship and becoming a doctor. It was an infection and freak accident at the age of seventeen that forced him to give up those dreams and turn his love of the sports into a new career. Despite the accidental calling, Sullivan thrived as a sportscaster and received numerous awards and accolades for his achievements, including eight Kentucky Sportscaster of the Year awards. Sadly, Sullivan's life and career were cut short by throat cancer; he was just forty-two when he died in 1967.

This book is recommended for high school and public libraries and for academic libraries with journalism programs.

*Karen J. Cook*  
State Library of Louisiana

**The British Gentry, the Southern Planter and the Northern Family Farmer: Agriculture and Sectional Antagonism in North America** James L. Huston. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015. ISBN 9780807159187. 376 p. \$47.50



Why does a reader select a book that contains 345 pages, 105 of them featuring data, charts, and lists, a section of Notes, a Bibliography and an Index? Usually my selection as a reader has a personal dimension to it—something emotional springs out at me. And often my choice is based upon the hope of finding primary source materials related to the topic that might provide more clues for research purposes.

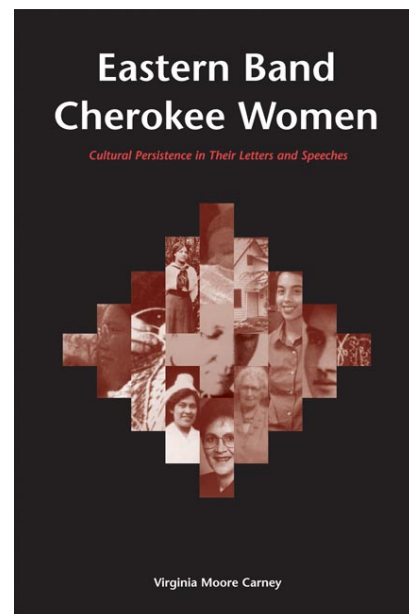
James Huston's newest book on US history captured my attention due to the title, "The British Gentry The Southern Planter and the Northern Family Farmer". I hold a fascination with plantations in the South. Additionally I hoped to learn more about the British Gentry and I knew nothing of the Northern Family Farmer. Flipping through the book, I saw some hot topics-- land ownership, Civil War causes and complications, slavery, tenancy, the rise and fall of political affiliations—and all seemed to be areas Huston explores in his research.

To a librarian or university faculty member, student or graduate student, I recommend Huston's research. I found an interview Huston provided and have given the link below for "Author's Corner" which features Huston providing some insights into his research and conclusions from the book.

See the Interview in the "Author's Corner" below  
<http://www.philipvickersfithian.com/2015/05/the-authors-corner-with-james-l-huston.html>

*Carol Walker Jordan*  
University of North Carolina, Greensboro

**Eastern Band Cherokee Women: Cultural Persistence in Their Letters and Speeches** Virginia Moore Carney. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2015. ISBN 1572333324. \$34.95.



Virginia Moore Carney begins her fascinating research by describing a letter she read ... "written by a Cherokee school girl in 1838". Carney explains that her family members told stories of Cherokee women who held strong desires to tell about their lives and family history. Without the means to write in traditional ways in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, those women jotted notes on wallpaper, kept diaries, and told stories to share what they knew of their experiences.