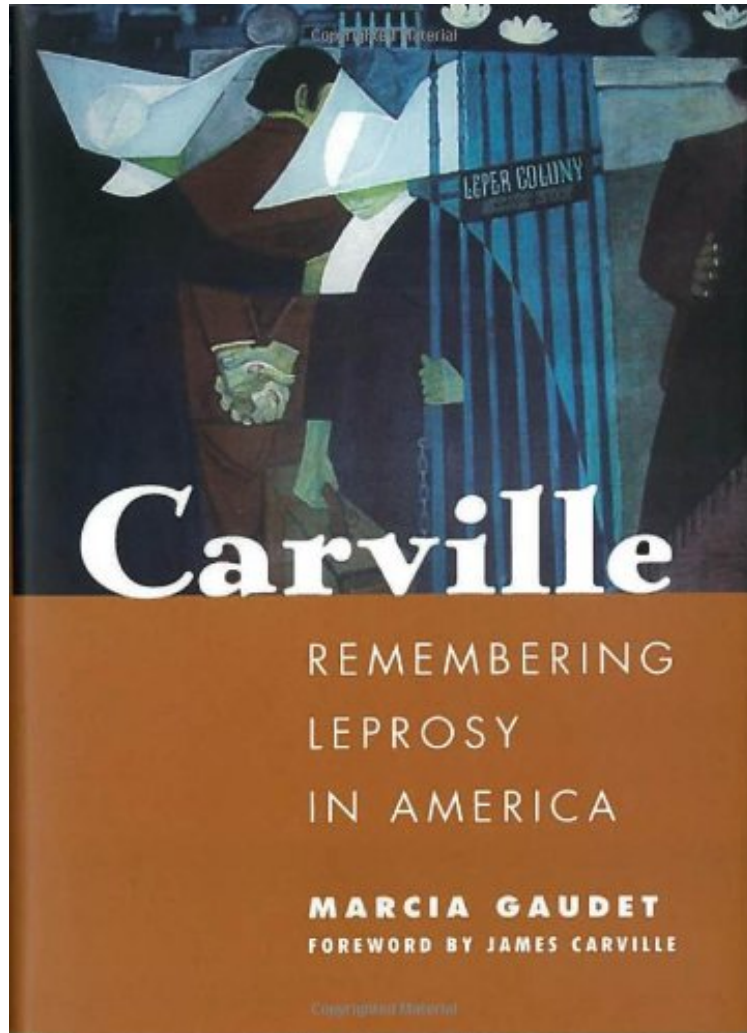


Carville: Remembering Leprosy in America

Marcia Gaudet

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#1515022 in Books 2004-12-02 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.26 x .94 x 5.321, .70 #File Name: 157806693X221 pages | File size: 19.Mb

Marcia Gaudet : Carville: Remembering Leprosy in America before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Carville: Remembering Leprosy in America:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Gerlinde Pflaumer-Yeater good 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. but reads more like a master's thesis than a book By Lina Brand This is helpful for research I am doing, but reads more like a master's thesis than a book. 25 of 25 people found the following review helpful. reflecting on carville By Claire Manes This book deserves a more intensive review than this, but it also deserves to be read, so I will at least share some random reflections on it. Carville is the name of a small community in south Louisiana. It is also a euphemism for the location of the hospital that for more than 100 years treated patients with leprosy (preferably called Hansen's disease.) As such Carville was a place of mystery and curiosity. Marcia Gaudet's

new book of recollections takes the mystery out of the place and shows it to be the home of an intensely courageous group of people, stigmatized for their condition but never defeated. The book which has much to offer to the scholar and the lay reader alike records the memories of trauma and grief that Hansen's disease patients endured. But the book does not stop with trauma. It relates the formation and growth of a community with its own traditions (escaping through the hole in the fence), celebrations (Mardi Gras) and tall tales. For anyone with even a casual interest in the lives of people in intensely painful situations the book is an inspiration and a must read.

Mysterious and misunderstood, distorted by biblical imagery of disfigurement and uncleanness, Hansen's disease or leprosy has all but disappeared from America's consciousness. In Carville, Louisiana, the closed doors of the nation's last center for the treatment of leprosy open to reveal stories of sadness, separation, and even strength in the face of what was once a life-wrenching diagnosis. Drawn from interviews with living patients and extensive research in the leprosarium's archives, *Carville: Remembering Leprosy in America* tells the stories of former patients at the National Hansen's Disease Center. For over a century, from 1894 until 1999, Carville was the site of the only in-patient hospital in the continental United States for the treatment of Hansen's disease, the preferred designation for leprosy. Patients-exiled there by law for treatment and for separation from the rest of society-reveal how they were able to cope with the devastating blow the diagnosis of leprosy dealt them. Leprosy was so frightening and so poorly understood that entire families would suffer and be shunned if one family member contracted the disease. When patients entered Carville, they typically left everything behind, including their legal names and their hopes for the future. Former patients at Carville give their views of the outside world and of the culture they forged within the treatment center, which included married and individual living quarters, a bar, and even a jail. Those quarantined in the leprosarium created their own Mardi Gras celebrations, their own newspaper, and their own body of honored stories in which fellow sufferers of Hansen's disease prevailed over trauma and ostracism. Through their memories and stories, we see their very human quest for identity and endurance with dignity, humor, and grace.

From the Publisher* Relates personal accounts of life in America's last colony for sufferers of Hansen's disease * Provides unprecedented insight and history into life at the only leprosarium in the continental United States * Contains heart-breaking stories of separation, grief, loneliness, but also accounts of sufferers triumphing over the effects of being ostracized * Offers valuable insights into the lives of a small group of individuals kept outside of normal American society * Strips the veil from a place with ominous notoriety to all Louisianans * Humanizes a tremendously misunderstood patient population
From the Inside Flap
Personal accounts of life in Americas last colony for sufferers of Hansens disease
About the Author
Marcia Gaudet is the Doris Meriwether/Board of Regents Professor of English at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.