

Nostalgic 'New Orleans Memories'

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New Orleans Memories by Carolyn Kolb explores the Big Easy, including the origins of that moniker. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Carolyn “Pani” Kolb brings a historian's sensibility, a reporter's attention to detail and a writer's ear to [*New Orleans Memories: One Writer's City*](#) (University Press of Mississippi, 2013).

The book of essays on food, Mardi Gras, literature and music takes a look at New Orleans from Kolb's perspective as a native who once worked as a *Times-Picayune* reporter covering Hurricane Betsy and who has lived in the city for more than 50 years.

New Orleans Memories is a cultural history, says Kolb. “It's not the history of great men and battles and dates. It's more a history of the people who are not so recorded.”

Recent history is the hardest kind of history to ascertain, says Kolb. “We go through life, looking at the rearview mirror and the only thing we see clearly is the past. Everything else is rushing by us.”

Kolb graduated from Newcomb College of Tulane University in 1963 and earned her PhD in urban history from the University of New Orleans in 2006 (finishing up her dissertation in the midst of the Hurricane Katrina chaos).

She is an adjunct lecturer in the Tulane [School of Continuing Studies](#) and has written other guidebooks, including *The Dolphin Guide to New Orleans* (1984; first edition, 1972). She's also a current columnist for *New Orleans Magazine*.

Among many subjects that *New Orleans Memories* discusses is the 1969 film *Easy Rider*. The movie's depiction of Mardi Gras influenced hippies and youth from all over the world to come to New Orleans, dramatically changing Carnival, says Kolb.

What Kolb wants for readers to take away from the book is “an affirmation of personal memory.”

“I think everybody should respect their own lives and their own personal memories,” she says. “Look back because it helps you look forward and it helps you appreciate the things that are going on right now.”