

Book Review in *Loyola Magazine* (Summer 2007)

Tami Hotard talks fast, thinks fast, and moves fast; therefore, there's probably no one more qualified to track the ghost of a New Orleans hero bigger than his size. With her recent book, ***IN PURSUIT OF PAT O'BRIEN***, Hotard grapples with the legend of the "Godfather of the French Quarter," the 19th-century-born proprietor of his namesake bar, known the world over for its charm, its piano bar, and the rum-soaked drink of O'Brien's own device, a Hurricane of a cocktail that, over the last half-century has left more people dazed in its wake than the real deal and has become synonymous with the city where the good times *roulez*.

The book, in the clever guise of a biography, is as much about the author and her adventures as Pat O'Brien himself, and she proves as lively a character as the man who she describes as the quintessential example of the "focused Irish temper." As chronicled, **Hotard** plays where O'Brien played, drinks what he drank, and even makes a trip to Angola to come face to face with one Walter Burnett, the man convicted (though convinced of his innocence) of gunning O'Brien down at his own estate.

Hotard, a professor at Gulf Coast College in Panama City, started from the bottom, and worked her way to the top. She began her writing career as an assistant copywriter, and then landed her own column in Loyola's *The Maroon*. Showing a bravery that she has kept throughout the years, she made a name for herself on the campus with a series of controversial articles on sexual harassment.

She credits Loyola, and the Jesuit tradition of the institution, with awakening her to "a way of life," a humanitarian perspective borne of the notions of living through spirit and the fact that people, in every conceivable way, are "made for the other."