

the Southern Register



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOUTHERN CULTURE • FALL 2005

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

Katrina

An ominous foreboding settled upon many of us who live near the Gulf Coast during the last weekend of August. We knew that Hurricane Katrina was out there, stoking its power on the warm Gulf waters, as hurricane forecasters warned that it could be an unprecedented force of hurricane destruction for the United States.

And so it was. The Category 4 Katrina blasted ashore in south Mississippi, leveling buildings blocks inland. The storm surge blew away houses that had survived Mississippi's greatest previous storm, the Category 5 Camille, in 1969. New Orleans did not take the direct blow that had been

feared by its residents, but the next day disaster of a different nature hit—the levees broke and the city flooded.

Like most Americans, those of us in Mississippi were transfixed with the news, watching on cable television the agonizing scenes of suffering people unable to escape the rising waters in New Orleans. We listened to Mississippi Public Broadcasting's coverage that gradually revealed, in the words of officials tending the storm victims, just how awfully the state's coastal communities had been hit.

Oxford experienced pounding rains, howling winds, and power outages but nothing like the rest of the state. The experience of the storm's effects this far

inland connected us, though, to those on the Coast. Jackson, 150 miles from the Coast, was hit hard. Katrina blew with Category 1 winds by the time it reached there, causing extended power outages and physical damage. Hattiesburg, 90 miles southeast of Jackson, suffered massive numbers of downed trees, roof damage, and power outages that lasted weeks. Gasoline shortages soon appeared, making travel difficult.

Inevitably, those of us at the Center and in Oxford began fearing for family and friends, and we exchanged stories. My assistant Sally's parents were trapped in their attic in Gulfport during the storm, feeling its frightening power. I worried about many friends of mine in New Orleans. Two of them, Barbara and Jerry, finally called days later from Barbara's mother's home in Baker, Louisiana, to say they had escaped but feared for their house and were unsure of their immediate future. One former student, Danna, was away from New Orleans, but suffered some damage at her home. I saw other former students, Scott and Ursula, at a coffee shop in Oxford one morning, evacuees who had just bought a house a month before in New Orleans but now were here to wait.

Communities across the nation sheltered such evacuees, and Oxford soon had between 2,000–3,000 new residents, at least temporarily. The



David Wharton

Algiers Ferry, New Orleans, Louisiana

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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Feelings of shock at the power of nature, fear for the safety of friends, anger at the slow government response in places, awe at the scale of destruction, and grief at the loss of life—all these emotions affected me at the news of Hurricane Katrina's impact on New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

By now the story of the hurricane is no longer news, but the impact on the lives of the people on the Coast, the South, and the nation continues. Estimates in late September were that 1.3 million Gulf Coast households had been displaced, with every state in the nation housing evacuees. Some families joined family members elsewhere, while others went where their church networks found sanctuaries. This displacement and migration will surely rank as one of the South's greatest demographic changes.

In fact, the possible regional and cultural effects of Katrina are important. The character of the Gulf Coast has long included an intimate familiarity with tropical storms, and the unusual number and power of them the last few years have made all of us who live near the Coast more aware of our ties to the beaches nearby. The Coast attracts tourists from around the nation and the world, but Southerners have a special relationship to the region. The South's predominant evangelical Protestantism may be moralistic, but our people flock to the casinos, music venues, and sun culture of the beaches.

Katrina may promote a newly intense regional identity among those on the Gulf Coast itself. Their shared experience of destruction and hoped-for recovery may nurture ties beyond state and local boundaries. President George W. Bush has proposed a "Gulf Opportunity Zone," which would be the basis for distribution of public and private resources aimed at recovery and renewal. This opportunity creates the possibility for regional planning on a scale not seen perhaps since the Tennessee Valley Authority transformed that economically and socially depressed region in the 20th century.

On a less grand scale, Katrina made people of the Gulf Coast appreciate parts of their culture that survived. One of my favorite examples is the New Orleans Saints, who have long been one of the Deep South's cultural institutions, their National Football League games broadcast across the region. Now, the Saints have a history of disappointing their fans; cynics might say the Saints have been the South's latest lost cause. But those fans are diehard. In the aftermath of Katrina, the Gulf Coast embraced the Saints anew. In their first game of the season, the Saints pulled off a miraculous last-minute victory. One newspaper headline read: "One for the Homefolks: Saints Give Their Battered Region Reason to Smile." Deuce McAllister, who scored two touchdowns in the win, was quoted as saying, "We were playing for the entire Gulf South region." Another player, Fred McAfee, said, "All we know is that we're playing for people from Pensacola, to Jackson, to Lake Charles, and especially New Orleans."

The Center's forthcoming conference, "Katrina: The Future of the Gulf Coast," December 2–3, will assess the state of recovery on the Coast by then, and we will also explore such issues as the special character and identity of the Coast and how to preserve them in its rebuilding. We invite our friends to attend as we provide a forum for policymakers and cultural observers to share their ideas and dreams. We hope the conference will fulfill the Endowment for the Future of the South's mission of making the Center a meeting place, bringing together authorities to plan for the South's development, even if it is in the face of disaster.

CHARLES REAGAN WILSON

(continued from page 1)

town government, the university, the churches, and endless families came together to staff shelters and arrange activities to assist the often shell-shocked victims of the storm.

The loss of life rose to over 1,000, and the image of bloated bodies floating in New Orleans waters will long haunt us. Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour noted that "a breathtaking amount of infrastructure" had been destroyed in south Mississippi, including roads, bridges, rail lines, water and sewer systems, and communications facilities. New Orleans had virtually locked down, with the failure of most public services and the unprecedented total evacuation of an American city.

Race and class injustices became especially apparent in New Orleans, as the poorest and a disproportionate number of blacks were trapped on rooftops and left in dangerous conditions in the Superdome and at the Convention Center. President Bush noted that the New Orleans scene could be traced back to the history of racial injustice under Jim Crow, and issues of Southern history now had a disturbing new relevancy.

The cultural and environmental impact of the storm on the Mississippi Coast was almost inconceivable. Historic buildings were devastated. Beauvoir, Jefferson Davis's home in Biloxi, was severely damaged but survived, probably the only antebellum building still standing on the Coast, which was one of the earliest areas of the United States settled by Europeans. Trees and shrubs were uprooted, creating an eerie stark landscape. Statues to historic events and

figures were toppled. Over half the Coast's restaurants were no longer there. Casino barges were lifted off moorings and dumped on the land. Half of its physicians were without offices or equipment, and many of them had left to start new practices elsewhere. The loss of valued artwork was dreadful. Museums were damaged or worse. The Walter Anderson Museum in Ocean Springs survived, but nearby Shearwater Pottery and the Anderson family compound holding much of Walter Anderson's work were destroyed, leaving the family searching in debris for watercolors and drawings to salvage.

Thoughts have now turned to recovery. Governor Barbour appointed businessman and philanthropist Jim Barksdale to head the Governor's Commission on Recovering, Rebuilding, and Renewal, which hopes to make its report by the end of this year. New Orleans's recovery was hampered by the effects of another storm, Hurricane Rita, which hit Texas three weeks after Katrina but brought enough rain to

New Orleans to lead to more flooding. Still, hopes were strong that the French Quarter and Business District would be up and running in October, with tourists welcomed back to help jump-start the economy.

The Center will hold its next Future of the South conference December 2-3, and the topic will be "Katrina: The Future of the Gulf Coast." We will bring together public policy analysts, mayors of affected cities, trade association leaders, and cultural commentators to report on the state of recovery of the Coast and also to share visions of the new Gulf Coast. That region has long been one that welcomed visitors and provided the pleasures of vacation holidays. Its cultural resources, historical treasures, and environmental wonders have always been part of its charm, and we will use our Future of the South forum to envisioning ways to recover as much as possible of that charm, in the face of natural disaster.

CHARLES REAGAN WILSON

Katrina: The Future of the Gulf Coast Conference December 2-3, 2005

The Center and the University's Department of Political Science will host a conference December 2-3 on the effects of Hurricane Katrina on the Gulf Coast and ideas for rebuilding. The conference will have sessions on the state of economic and social recovery and will bring together a diverse group of commentators to share their visions of a new Coast. We have planned the meeting with the assistance of William Winter, and we hope to provide a forum for the Governor's Commission on Rebuilding, Recovery, and Renewal, of which Governor Winter is a member.

The conference is a project of the Center's Future of the South initiative, supported by a grant from the Phil Hardin Foundation and matching contributions from Center friends.

CHARLES REAGAN WILSON

High-quality unpublished poems sought for anthology

Hurricane Blues: Poems on How Katrina and Rita Ravaged a Nation

Edited by Philip Kolin and Susan Swartwout.

To be published by Southeast Missouri State University Press in Fall 2006.

Send 1 to 4 poems to

Southeast Missouri State University Press, MS 2650 One University Plaza, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701.

No e-submissions.

Proceeds Go to Hurricane Relief.

Mark Your Calendars

December 2–3, 2005

Future of the South Initiative
 “Katrina: The Future of the Gulf Coast”

www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/

February 10–11, 2006

Blues Today: A *Living Blues* Symposium

“Blues: The Devil’s Music?”

www.outreach.olemiss.edu/livingblues/bluestoday/

March 27–30, 2006

Mississippi Delta Literary Tour

www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/

March 30–April 1, 2006

Oxford Conference for the Book

www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/

May 5–6, 2006

Southern Gardens Symposium

www.outreach.olemiss.edu/gardening/

June 10, 2006

Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Awards

Oxford, Mississippi

www.ms-arts-letters.org

July 23–27, 2006

Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference

www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner/

Look for other spring events:

Conference on the Civil War

Double Decker Bookend Events

Living Blues News

The latest issue of *Living Blues* magazine focuses on Texas blues and includes profiles on Little Joe Washington, Earl Gilliam, and Tutu Jones, as well as an extensive review of new music releases by Texas blues artists. A tribute to blues great Little Milton, who recently passed away, is also included with comments from his friends and fellow musicians.

Last month, *Living Blues* unveiled the new Web site (www.livingblues.com), allowing users to subscribe to the magazine, purchase T-shirts and directories, and peruse back issues of *Living Blues* online. The Web site is Verisign secured and will feature contests and giveaways in the near future. Furthermore, on campus, *Living Blues* hosted a “Blues in the Grove” concert with the legendary “Stoop Down Man” Chick Willis on Friday, October 21, 2005, during the Ole Miss v. Kentucky football weekend.



Finally, the Fourth Annual Blues Today: A *Living Blues* Symposium is scheduled for February 10 and 11, 2006, at the University of Mississippi in Oxford. The theme “Blues: The Devil’s Music?” will be explored through panel discussions, interviews with musicians, photo displays, and live music. William Ferris, the Joel Williamson Professor of History at the University of North Carolina, will deliver the Early Wright Lecture on Saturday, February 11. The symposium will also feature a day excursion to Clarksdale, Mississippi, including museum tours and live music. A reunion of the famed “Satan and Adam” guitar/harmonica duo is also in the works. Make your plans now and please check the Web site for details and program updates or contact Mary Beth Lasseter at marybeth@olemiss.edu for further details.



MARK CAMARIGG

Bohemia's Last Frontier

This article by Curtis Wilkie appeared in The Nation on October 3, 2005, and is reprinted here courtesy of the editors.

If the restoration of New Orleans fails as miserably as its rescue, the nation will have lost a cultural treasure as well as an important enclave of progressive values and Democratic strength in the Deep South.

From the time French explorers claimed a clearing for a settlement along the massive river three centuries ago, New Orleans existed as a place distinctly different from the rest of the country. There was never anything remotely Puritanical about its early years. A strong hint of the pagan could be smelled in the air, and in modern times the city became a refreshing detour off the Bible Beltway. While the rest of the region exercised piety, New Orleans honored tolerance. In New Orleans, wine, women, and song were not synonymous with sin; gay people found refuge; and racially mixed couples were acceptable at a time when there were laws against miscegenation in neighboring states.

New Orleans was not without the racial tensions and urban problems that grip other American municipalities. Its public schools had deteriorated badly, presenting an image as shameful as its gang-infested housing projects. In the days since Katrina struck, the world has been exposed to New Orleans' saddest and seamiest side: the inequities that trapped the poor in neighborhoods vulnerable to flooding, the distrust that troubled relations between blacks and whites. New Orleans was always a poor place; that's why the blues resonated so clearly here. Yet a dogged live-and-let-live spirit helped the city transcend its difficulties and persevere as one of the last resorts for romantics.

Though a polyglot army of pirates and militiamen fought a famous battle a few miles down the river at the end of the War of 1812, New Orleans was not known to be bellicose like its sister cities



David Wharton

Horse and Airport Van in French Quarter, New Orleans

in the South. The city surrendered without a fight at the beginning of the Civil War and endured its occupation with characteristic élan. Residents painted the visage of Union General Benjamin Butler on the bottom of their chamber pots and dumped the morning contents on the heads of Yankee soldiers from the same balconies where their descendants would fling Mardi Gras beads a century later. That was the extent of the resistance. New Orleans did not suffer from the hard-core Confederacy complex that still contributes to the South's conservatism. The city got over the war and went about the business of growing as a cosmopolitan port.

The city harbored slave markets in the first half of the 19th century. But even before Emancipation, New Orleans had a bourgeois class known as "free gentlemen of color." Many came from the Caribbean, spoke French, and supported a network of educators, musicians, and writers. After Reconstruction, African Americans and Creoles gained a foothold in New Orleans more rapidly than elsewhere in the South. Well before the

Voting Rights Act of 1965, New Orleans blacks voted in large numbers, encouraged by the quirky populist regime of Huey P. Long, which controlled Louisiana during the Depression. The city's black society sent out two sons, Maynard Jackson and Andrew Young, who became mayors of Atlanta. By the mid-1970s the black majority gained political supremacy in New Orleans as well, resulting in a succession of black mayors that continues to this day.

Disgruntled whites shuffled off to suburbs in Jefferson and St. Tammany parishes, and their departure left the city increasingly in the hands of blacks and whites unperturbed by racial fears. When David Duke, the wizard of a faction of the Ku Klux Klan, wound up in a run-off for governor of Louisiana in 1991, he was rejected overwhelmingly in New Orleans, where a stunning 87 percent of the voting population (the count against Duke was 173,744 to 25,921) supported the eventual winner, Edwin Edwards. A year the New Orleans vote provided Bill Clinton's margin of victory in Louisiana.

Politics in New Orleans has been a

byproduct of a way of life that grew out of the city's history. While much of the South was being settled by Calvinistic Scots-Irish immigrants, New Orleans developed as home for a mélange of ethnic backgrounds. French and Spanish flags flew over the city before the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Slavery brought thousands from Africa. Then came the Irish and Italian laborers, German businessmen, Greek restaurateurs, and merchants from the Middle East. By the beginning of the 20th century New Orleans stood as a largely Roman Catholic island in a sea of Southern Baptists. A strong, stable Jewish population provided more leavening. The Rev. Jimmy Swaggart might prosper down Airline Highway in Baton Rouge, but New Orleans was hostile territory for the tent revivalists and braying fundamentalist demagogues.

From its site in the deepest part of the South, New Orleans acted as an anti-Montgomery, offering antithesis to the Southern stereotypes of redneck sheriffs, moonlight and magnolias. And it stubbornly resisted modern homogenization. New Orleans was a city of idiosyncrasies, sweeping from the palatial mansions along the St. Charles Avenue streetcar line to the rundown bungalows and shotgun houses in the working-class wards. Much of the architecture in the fabled French Quarter either reflected a Spanish influence or consisted of Creole cottages built in the Caribbean style. Despite its name, the French Quarter was actually a residential neighborhood for Sicilian families for most of the past century, until it was discovered by artists and writers and antiestablishment characters such as Ruthie the Duck Girl, an elderly woman who kept a duck on a leash and caded drinks in the corner bars.

In *Faulkner*, Joseph Blotner's biography, the author writes of how the aspiring Mississippi novelist and others were attracted to New Orleans after World War I. These "young artists in revolt and champions of the arts" were reacting, Blotner says, to H. L. Mencken's scornful 1917 essay "The Sahara of the Bozart." They felt

Mencken's theory could be disproved in New Orleans.

The South, Mencken had claimed, was a cultural wasteland. "In all that gargantuan paradise of the fourth-rate," Mencken wrote, "there is not a single picture gallery worth going into, or a single orchestra capable of playing the nine symphonies of Beethoven, or a single opera house, or a single theater devoted to decent plays, or a single monument that is worth looking at." Yet in New Orleans there were museums and orchestras and theaters. And the city nurtured writers, from Kate Chopin and Lillian Hellman to early Faulkner and Sherwood Anderson and, later, to Walker Percy and Richard Ford. Tennessee Williams called the French Quarter, the neighborhood he chose as his home, "the last frontier of Bohemia."

Before the storm, New Orleans hosted two literary festivals: one linked to Faulkner, the other to Williams. The latter featured a contest for those who felt they could shout "Stella!" the loudest, a slightly refined example of street theatre.

New Orleans could be raunchy. The striptease joints on Bourbon Street were tolerated for tourists' sake. But New Orleans preferred its own kind of spectacle, using the slightest excuse for a parade. St. Patrick's Day. St. Joseph's Day. Anybody's birthday. Hundreds of transvestites in outrageous drag marched every Labor Day in connection with an event called "Southern Decadence Weekend." To tweak the wealthy barons of Uptown, who bankrolled Mardi Gras through their private krewes—as they called the organizations responsible for the lavish carnival floats—commoners organized a rump parade called the "Krewe of Barkus." It involved several thousand hounds of all description parading through the French Quarter. Most famously, New Orleans turned a religious event into a bacchanal, spending the two weeks leading to Lent in revelry as boisterous as the celebrations in Venice and Rio de Janeiro. Lent, when it came, was not observed faithfully, abstinence not being in the New Orleans manner. Bars

were open 24/7 and drinking was permitted on the street. The city actually had an ordinance requiring bartenders to furnish plastic containers known locally as Go-cups.

The celebrities in New Orleans were chefs, men and women who enjoyed a higher place in the city's pantheon than sports figures or political leaders or television personalities. New Orleanians talked about eating like Bostonians talk baseball. Visitors might have known about Antoine's and Commander's Palace, but locals knew Mandina's and Casamento's. The native cuisine was Creole—not to be confused with Cajun—and many of the ingredients came from the nearby Gulf. There was nothing bland about it. Even the lesser dishes were unique: the gigantic Muffaletta sandwich, built with cold-cut salami and ground olives, the Po' Boys bulging with fried oysters, the Lucky Dogs that gave sustenance to millions of late-night drunks. (Oh, that Ignatius J. Reilly, the purveyor of Lucky Dogs in *Confederacy of Dunces*, could see his city now.)

As much as New Orleans loved good food, it moved to music. Gospel. Folk. Funk. Blues. Rock 'n' roll. Jazz was born here, and when someone died here there was no better sendoff than a jazz funeral beginning with soulful dirges and ending in an explosion of colorful umbrellas and an upbeat version of "When the Saints Go Marching In." New Orleanians appreciated good music—Mencken be damned. They were connoisseurs of the improvisation or the backbeat. They knew that Kermit Ruffins blew his horn on Thursday night at an out-of-the-way spot in the Bywater section. That Aaron Neville sang carols a cappella on Christmas Eve at a church on Rampart Street.

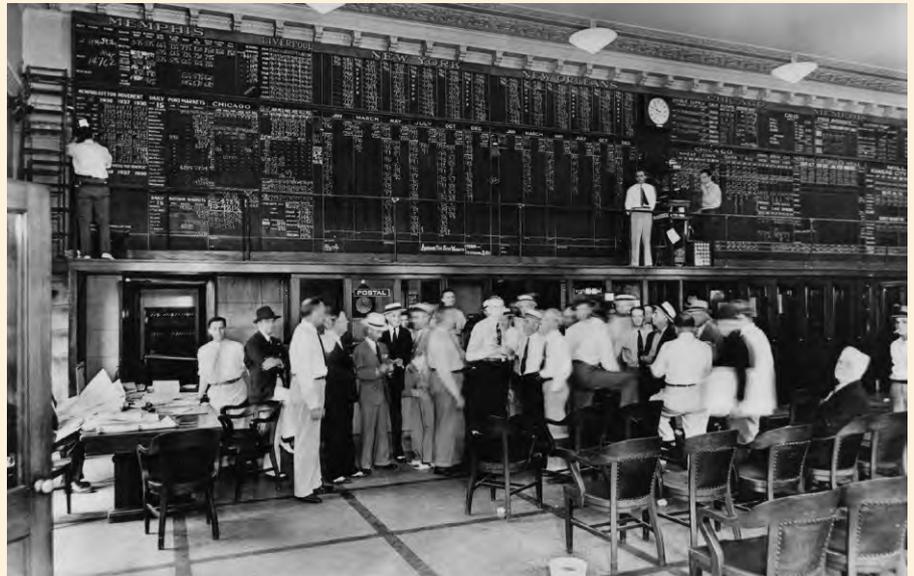
Suddenly, the sounds are silent, the streets still, the people dispersed. Merriment has given way to lamentation, and no one knows when the good times will roll again.

The Cotton Museum at the Memphis Cotton Exchange

In January 2006 the Memphis Cotton Exchange building on Front Street will open its main floor as a museum dedicated to telling the story of this powerful industry, from field to factory, and of how this one plant has affected so many lives and cultures throughout human history, especially in the American South.

Once the economic center of this cotton culture, the Exchange floor will now house exhibitions dedicated to capturing the world of cotton, through the creative efforts of architect Williamson Pounders Architects, Design 500, Counterpoint Communications and Design, Memphis Pink Palace Museum, and the videos and productions of the William Bearden Company. Highlights will include a restoration of the floor to the 1940s era, oral histories viewed in the original phone booths used for cotton trades, the original Western Union office with telegraph equipment, a Cotton Museum Hall of Fame, a mural of the cotton story by a leading Memphis artist, and exhibitions and films that present the history of the cotton industry and Front Street, especially from the 1800s to the present.

The University of Mississippi's Center for the Study of Southern Culture is currently taking part in the development of the Cotton Museum through a graduate student assistantship funded by the Museum. The work involves direct participation in various aspects of the museum's creation, from film production to exhibit research. An advisory panel made up of professors and professionals from the Center is also working in partnership with the museum to provide guidance, archival research, and the production of temporary exhibits that will focus on specific themes, issues, personalities, or narratives that reveal the impact of the cotton industry. The first exhibition will feature stories and photographs of the Delta cotton plantations that shaped the experiences, perspectives, and creative energies of various renowned musicians, from Muddy Waters to Johnny Cash. After being displayed in the Cotton Museum, these exhibitions will travel to libraries



The "floor" of the Memphis Cotton Exchange is a high-ceilinged room with large windows opening onto both Front Street and Union Avenue. The other two walls of the room were completely covered with the "boards," where quotations of all future markets, the current spot prices, ginnings, acreage, consumption, and any statistic necessary to the conduct of the cotton industry were posted.

and schools throughout the area, to educate students and the public on how cotton has influenced many aspects of life in the South.

The story of the cotton industry is rich and deep, and resonates throughout the music, art, literature, social life, and politics in Memphis, the American South, the nation, and the world. The

Cotton Museum will provide a unique opportunity to define this story for the public and portray the role of the Cotton Exchange as a true crossroads of this profoundly influential culture.

For more information, visit www.memphiscottonmuseum.org or e-mail info@memphiscottonmuseum.org.

MARY BATTLE

The Story of Cotton

In the barbecue joints and plate-lunch cafés off Memphis's Front Street, a mostly hidden society exists. The view into this world is slightly opaque to all but those in the know, but in its glory days it wielded a measure of influence that is unheard of in today's world. It was a society peopled with characters and cads, the big and the small time, the rich and the richer, the hangers-on, the anointed, the powerful, and the busted. It created empires in agriculture, transportation, banking, warehousing, and a hundred other businesses. And even though much of the day-to-day dealings have moved to manicured office parks, high-rise office buildings, and other nondescript locales, its influence remains at the core of the Memphis economy and Memphis society. It was the entity that propelled technological advances that changed the face and the soul of the South. It was the wellspring from which no less than modern music and much of our popular culture came into being. It triggered migrations by millions of blacks and whites, changing forever the culture of Northern cities like Chicago, Detroit, and St. Louis. Its allure has called out to writers, artists, photographers, and other cultural chroniclers from around the world, drawing the curious to plumb the depths of its strength and energy. It spawned its own literature in the writings of William Faulkner, Walker Percy, Richard Wright, Willie Morris, and dozens of others. Its influence is the nucleus of what popular music, through blues and jazz and rock and roll, has become. This all-powerful entity is cotton.

WILLIAM BEARDEN

In Memoriam

Friends of the Center

Thomas D. Clark

July 14, 1903 - June 28, 2005

Thomas Dionysius Clark was born in Louisville, Mississippi, and after receiving his baccalaureate degree from Ole Miss in 1928, moved to Lexington, Kentucky, where he stayed for more than 75 years. He taught history at the University of Kentucky for 36 years and authored, coauthored, or edited three dozen books, including *A History of Kentucky*. He wrote scores of scholarly articles and many of the entries in *The Kentucky Encyclopedia*, *The Encyclopedia of Louisville*, and the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, for which he served as editor of the agriculture section.

Milburn James Crowe

March 15, 1933 - September 10, 2005

Milburn Crowe was born in Mound Bayou, Mississippi, the all-black municipality that his father and other ex-slaves founded in 1887. He served as commissioner for the Mississippi Delta Empowerment Zone Alliance and as Mound Bayou's city clerk and election commissioner and manager. He was the unofficial historian of the town and gathered an enormous archive of documents and photographs documenting its history. He was a member of the Mississippi Historical Society Board of Directors, the State Historical Records Advisory Board, and committees for the Old Capitol Museum and the planned Museum of Mississippi History.

James Earl Fisher

December 24, 1947 - August 23, 2005

James Earl Fisher, or "Fisher" as he was widely known, was a descendant of some of the earliest African American settlers in Oxford and Lafayette County. A fun loving person who knew no stranger, he loved gospel singing, cooking, collecting antiques, buying and selling clothes, and mainly talking about his family's history.

Shelby Foote

November 7, 1916 - June 27, 2005

Shelby Foote, a native of Greenville, Mississippi, and a longtime resident of Memphis, Tennessee, was the author of six novels and the three-volume *The Civil War: A Narrative*, which the Modern Library ranked as Number 15 on its 1999 list of the 20th century's 100 best works of nonfiction in the English language. He gained national prominence for his role as commentator in the 11-hour television documentary on the Civil War, produced and directed by Ken Burns and first shown on the Public Broadcast System in 1990.

M. B. Mayfield

April 26, 1923 - June 3, 2005

Artist M. B. Mayfield was a native of Ecu, Mississippi, where he spent the latter part of his life. He studied art while an unofficial custodian at the University of Mississippi from 1949 to 1952 and then moved to Memphis, Tennessee, where he served as custodian of the Brooks Art Museum for years. He became known for his paintings depicting scenes of African American life during his childhood. Later, he also painted portraits of famous figures such as William Faulkner, Oprah Winfrey, Isaac Hayes, and Elvis Presley. Many of his paintings are reproduced in his autobiography, *Baby Who Crawled Backwards*.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha: July 23-27, 2006 "Global Faulkner"

One of the results of recent literary and historical investigation of the United States South is to reveal a world rich in paradox. It is a world deeply conscious of its own colonization—its defeat, occupation, and exploitation by the North—even as it has been the site of a sustained period of colonization by one segment of its own population. It is a world that throughout its history has been regarded, and has regarded itself, as exceptional, and yet, as a plantation economy, as the victim and practitioner of forms of imperialism, as a culture characterized by racial suspicion and racial intimacy, the South has a history that shares significant common ground with the United States as a whole and with the rest of the hemisphere to the south and to the north. Moreover, the perennial fascination with the United States South demonstrated by countries and cultures outside North and South America suggests a larger global dimension, the recognition of a representativeness even wider than we have imagined.

The 33rd annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha conference will examine Faulkner's fiction in terms of its depiction of the South as a representative "global" culture. How does Faulkner realize its apparent contradictions, and to what extent does he propose their reconciliation? Is Faulkner's "global" understanding of the South a source of hope or of tension and even tragedy within his fiction? How might this approach to Faulkner affect the teaching of his work, particularly outside the U.S. South?

We are inviting 40-minute plenary papers and 20-minute panel papers. Plenary papers consist of approximately 5,000 words and will be published by the University Press of Mississippi. Panel papers consist of approximately 2,500 words; a selection of these papers for publication in the conference volume will be made by a jury of the conference program committee.

For plenary papers three copies of manuscripts must be submitted by January

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Mississippi Delta Literary Tour March 27 - 30, 2006

The Mississippi Delta is the site of a spring tour organized by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture. Focusing on the area's legendary blues, writers, and food—along with its tumultuous history—the program is based in Greenwood, home of playwright Endesha Ida Mae Holland and memoirist Mildred Topp, and will include day trips to three other towns.

Scheduled for Monday, March 27, is a bus trip to the historic town of Carrollton, ancestral and early home of novelist, story writer, and memoirist Elizabeth Spencer. On Tuesday, March 28, the group will travel to Greenville, home of William Alexander Percy, Ellen Douglas, Shelby Foote, Bern Keating, Walker Percy, Julia Reed, Ben Wasson, and many other writers. On Wednesday, March 29, the group will go to Sumner, where the Emmett Till murder trial took place and the scene of Lewis Nordan's novel *Wolf Whistle*, based on the Till case.

Also scheduled are meals at notable Delta restaurants as well as live blues and gospel performances. On March 30, after breakfast at the Alluvian-Viking Range Corporation's boutique hotel—participants will be free to travel on their own to the Oxford Conference for the Book, which will begin that afternoon.

The Delta tour is \$475 per person for all program activities, eight meals, and local transportation. The fee does not include lodging. To register, visit the Center's Web site (www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/). Remember to sign up early. Only 35 spots are available, and they will go fast.

Group accommodations have been arranged at the Alluvian, in downtown Greenwood. [www.thealluvian.com] **Rooms at the Alluvian require a separate registration** and are priced at a discounted rate of \$145. Rooms may be reserved by calling 866-600-5201 and asking for the special "Literary Tour" rate. In the event that the Alluvian sells out before you get a chance to book a room, call the Greenwood Best Western, 662-455-5777.

The 13th Oxford Conference for the Book The University of Mississippi • Oxford, Mississippi March 30 - April 1, 2006

Notable authors, editors, publishers, and others in the trade as well as educators, literacy advocates, readers, and book lovers will gather for the 13th Oxford Conference for the Book, set for March 30–April 1, 2006. Beginning on Thursday afternoon with two sessions and a special conference edition of *Thacker Mountain Radio*, the program will continue through Saturday afternoon with addresses, panels, and readings. A fiction and poetry jam, an Elderhostel program, a marathon book signing at Square Books, and an optional literary tour of the Mississippi Delta (March 27–April 1) are also part of the festivities.

The 2006 conference is dedicated to novelist and historian Shelby Foote (1916–2005), a native of Greenville, Mississippi, and a longtime resident of Memphis, Tennessee. Ellen Douglas, novelist and friend since their days in Greenville, will open the conference with a talk about Foote as a fiction writer. Gary W. Gallagher, professor of history at the University of Virginia, will discuss Foote's three-volume history of the Civil War. There will also be a panel with members of the Memphis book club in which the author participated for more than a quarter of a century.

The slate of speakers is not yet final, but already signed up are poet Julianna Baggott; fiction writers Brian Keith Jackson, Jack Pendarvis, George Saunders, Michael Knight; art historians Patti Carr Black, Mary Lynn Kotz, Mark Stevens, Annalyn Swan; and journalists James Gill and Thomas Oliphant. Novelist, journalist, and playwright Larry L. King will be here to unveil his memoir of Willie Morris, to be published in March 2006.

Once again, the Junior Auxiliary of Oxford, the Lafayette County Literacy Council, Square Books Jr., and other collaborators will bring local fifth graders to the campus to meet an author of books for young readers. The program is being expanded in 2006 to include a session for ninth graders with Sharon M. Draper, author of *The Battle of Jericho* and other award-winning books. Regular panels like "The Endangered Species: Readers Today and Tomorrow" and "Finding a Voice/Reaching an Audience" are also scheduled.

The conference is open to the public without charge. To assure seating space, those interested in attending should preregister by contacting the Center for the Study of Southern Culture. Reservations and advance payment are required for two optional events honoring conference speakers: a cocktail buffet at Isom Place (\$50) and a country dinner at Taylor Catfish (\$25). Special registration is required for the Delta Literary Tour. Call 662-925-5993, e-mail marybeth@olemiss.edu, or visit www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/ for more information or to register for conference programs.

Detailed information about the program, speakers, and registration will soon be available on the Center's Web site (www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/) or the Square Books site (www.squarebooks.com).

An easy way to attend the Oxford Conference for the Book is through Elderhostel, an international program of educational travel for adults 55 and older. For \$444 per person, everything is provided: the conference, three nights' lodging at the newly renovated Downtown Oxford Inn and Suites, all meals from dinner March 30 through breakfast April 2, and local transportation to and from conference activities. To register, call toll-free, 877-426-8056, or go to www.elderhostel.org, and refer to "So You Love Books? Get between the Pages at the Oxford Conference for the Book," program number 12317-033006. For information, call Center Advisory Committee member and longtime Elderhostel provider Carolyn Vance Smith in Natchez, 601-446-1208, or e-mail her at Carolyn.Smith@colin.edu.

Thacker Mountain Radio Grows and Grows

Thacker Mountain Radio, in its early incarnation, debuted on October 15, 1997. First billed as the *Words and Music Community Radio Hour*, the show rose in the midst of a radio renaissance in Oxford at a time when four different live radio shows were being broadcast from various venues around town. *Words and Music* began as a collaboration between Square Books owner Richard Howorth and two ambitious local musicians, Bryan Ledford and Caroline Herring, whose band The Sincere Ramblers hosted the show in Howorth's cavernous used bookshop, Off Square Books. The free admission and diverse program, mixing author readings and live musical

performances, was an instant attraction, and the show quickly evolved into *Thacker Mountain Radio*.

While the show was designed as a free community radio program for the people of Oxford and Lafayette County, *Thacker Mountain Radio* widened its content to attract a statewide audience when Mississippi Public Broadcasting began airing the program in the fall of 2002. From its inception, the show has benefited from Oxford's far-reaching appeal, which draws authors and musicians from all over the world. This year that appeal was recognized when *Thacker Mountain Radio* was presented with the Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts in Mississippi.

As *Thacker Mountain Radio* has grown and developed over the years, the nonprofit show has received support from many sources. Mississippi Public Broadcasting moved it to the prime slot of 7:00 p.m. on Saturday night following Garrison Keillor's *Prairie Home Companion*. *Thacker* has benefited from invaluable assistance from the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi and grants from the Mississippi Arts Commission, Mississippi Humanities Commission, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Yoknapatawpha Arts Council, as well as donations from individuals and private foundations.

Friends of Thacker Mountain

Thacker Mountain Radio • c/o Square Books • 160 Courthouse Square • Oxford, MS 38655

I would like to become a Friend of Thacker Mountain and am including a season donation of

\$10 (student) \$40 Other \$_____ (Please make checks payable to Friends of Thacker Mountain.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

I would like to have my gift acknowledged in show literature.

Contact me about having an announcement made during a show.

l y n n & s t e w a r t

Gammill



Gallery

Exhibition Schedule

September 26 - November 11,
2005

Southern Food in conTEXTS
Amy Evans

November 14, 2005 - January 13,
2006

*The Religious Landscape of
Southern Roadsides*
Joe York

January 15 - March 22, 2006

*Sacred Steel: The Music and
Culture of the House of God and
Church of the Living God*
Bob Stone

The Gammill Gallery, located in Barnard Observatory, is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., except for University holidays. Telephone: 662-915-5993.

Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Makes Calls for Awards Nominations, Invites New Members

The Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters (MIAL) will accept nominations for 2005 artist awards from now until January 15, 2006. Awards to Mississippi's outstanding artists in the categories of Fiction, Music Composition (Concert and Popular), Nonfiction, Photography, Poetry, and Visual Arts will be presented at MIAL's annual gala scheduled for June 10, 2005, in Oxford. The awards honor the achievements of living Mississippians (current residents or former ones with continuing, significant ties to the state). Artists are nominated on the basis of work shown, published, or performed in 2005.

Only members of MIAL may nominate. Anyone may join;

membership dues start at \$35 for an individual (students at \$15). Visit MIAL's Web site at www.ms-arts-letters.org for complete instructions about joining and about nominating an artist for an award.

MIAL is now in its 27th year, having begun in 1978. Among its founders were Governor William Winter, Cora Norman, Aubrey Lucas, Noel Polk, and Keith Dockery McLean. Their purpose was to establish a way to support, nurture, and recognize one of Mississippi's most important resources, her artists. Recipients are awarded cash prizes and Mississippi-made gifts.

The competition is a juried one, with judges, prominent in their fields, chosen from out of state. MIAL is

privately funded, self-perpetuating, and nonprofit.

Artists honored in past years include Ellen Douglas, Walker Percy, Willie Morris, Richard Ford, Barry Hannah, Samuel Jones, James Slater, William Dunlap, John Stone, Gwendolyn Magee, and Birney Imes III.

Plans are under way for a day of events preceding the annual awards gala at the Oxford Conference Center. A tour of Rowan Oak and an exhibit at the University Museum by Gwen Magee, a former MIAL award winner and current member of the MIAL Board of Governors, are two of the special highlights being planned. Magee's exhibition is called *Journey of the Spirit* and draws its inspiration from the hymn "Lift Every Voice and Sing." Ann Abadie, Oxford, is chair of the program committee planning the gala. Other program committee members are Bonnie Davidson, Tupelo; Sandra Shellnut, Pass Christian; Patty Lewis, Oxford; Jan Taylor and Mark Wiggs, Jackson.

For additional information, contact Margaret Anne Mitchell at 601-366-0761 or write MIAL, P.O. Box 2346, Jackson, MS 39225-2346. The MIAL Web site address is www.ms-arts-letters.org.

MARION BARNWELL



Recipients of 2005 MIAL awards pictured here are (from left) Brooks Haxton (Poetry), Gretchen Haien (Photography), Justin Sharp (Musical Composition), and Margaret McMullan (Fiction). Not pictured are Sam Gilliam (Visual Arts) and Timothy B. Smith (Nonfiction).

Claiborne Barnwell

MIAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Daytime Telephone _____

Check membership dues category:

Student \$15

Individual \$35

Contributing (couples) \$60

Sustaining \$125

Institutional \$150

Patron \$1,000

Make checks payable to MIAL. Send to Margaret Anne Mitchell, Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 2346, Jackson, MS 39225-2346.

Bercaw Attends NEH Summer Institute at the Huntington Library

Nancy Bercaw says that studying Western history this summer made her realize how “advanced Southern Studies is in its thinking about region.”

Bercaw, associate professor of history and Southern Studies at Ole Miss, spent the five weeks before the fall semester as a fellow with the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute titled “The Redemptive West: Nationhood and Healing in the Post-Civil War American West.” Bercaw was one of 25 college and university faculty from around the country awarded grants to attend the institute, based at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. While there, she and the institute’s other fellows spent their mornings participating in discussions led by experts in Western history, literature, and art history.

“The institute made me realize that Western Studies doesn’t confront such complicated issues as race in as sophisticated a manner,” says Bercaw, who specializes in Southern history during the time of emancipation. “Reading Western literature made me see how Southern Studies would approach problems differently.”

Besides the opportunity to study the West, Bercaw was free each afternoon

to conduct her own research, using the vast resources of the Huntington Library. She spent hours poring through 19th-century medical manuals in an attempt to understand the thinking behind medical researchers’ interest in collecting and comparing cadavers of different races.

“Historians have tended to skip over the time period from the Civil War until 1890,” Bercaw says. “There’s no clear narrative for that period. It’s a strange time because people are conflicted and are not doing some of the racist things that they’ll do later, during Jim Crow. The writings of doctors during the 1860s show the mindset of how people are dealing with issues of race at the time.”

In coming months Bercaw will continue her research—in January she’ll spend time as a Wood Fellow at the College of Physicians in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—before shaping it into a book chapter tentatively titled “Collecting ‘Black’ Bodies: Medicine, Museums, and Race.” The working title for the book itself is *Disrupting Categories: A Cultural History of Black Womanhood in the Age of Emancipation*.

“It’s amazing that 1862, the first year black people started freeing themselves



David Wharton

Nancy Bercaw

in the South, also marked the first year the government began collecting bodies for research,” Bercaw said. “In 1867, the year black men voted for the first time, the government issued a call for racialized body types. These were the first steps of racialized science.”

Bercaw says that exploring the manuals, many of which dealt with the collection of Indian bodies in the West, and simultaneously participating in the seminar “reaffirmed [her] faith” in Southern Studies. “I was glad to come back to Mississippi,” she says. “Much of the Western scholarship ignores the fact that their history is very similar to Southern history as far as issues of race.”

JENNIFER SOUTHALL

New Graduate Students in Southern Studies

New Southern Studies graduate students pictured at Barnard Observatory are, left to right, front row: Emily Romines (Truman State University), Amy Schmidt (Lyon College), Catherine Barnett (University of Florida), Mark Coltrain (University of North Carolina at Greensboro); second row: Katie Stevens (Williams College), Georgeanna Milam (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), Maarten Zwiers (University of Groningen, Netherlands), L. V. McNeil (University of Mississippi); third row: Natoria Kennell (University of Mississippi), Mary Margaret Miller (University of Mississippi), J. Arthur Greene (University of Washington), and Matthew Glass (Auburn University). Not pictured are Kirk Graves (Princeton University), Odie Lindsey (Art Institute of Chicago), Kate Medley (University of Arkansas), and Velsie Pate (University of Mississippi).



Mary Beth Lasseer

Sally Graham: Southern Studies Superstar on CNN

Sally Graham has observed presidential elections in the Philippines, studied in Kenya and Australia, taught in the island Republic of Palau, and is currently starring in *Rabbit Hunt*, a “mockumentary” about Southern folk art now being submitted to film festivals. But Graham, who works in Atlanta as a writer for CNN International, says that she counts earning her master’s degree in Southern Studies as rewarding as any experience she’s had.

“I consider my Southern Studies master’s degree as equally important in my personal development as earning an Ivy League undergraduate degree,” says Graham, who received her bachelor’s degree from Columbia University. “The University of Mississippi’s graduate program in Southern Studies is the most comprehensive of its kind and the first program to focus on the American South. They say imitation is the highest form of flattery—well, other institutions of higher learning have similar programs but nothing beats Oxford and the faculty at the University of Mississippi.”

Graham says that it was an article in *Southern Living* magazine that turned her on to enrolling in the Southern Studies MA program at Ole Miss. She was driving across the South with her mother, from Macon, Georgia, to Graham’s birthplace of Hot Springs, Arkansas, when she flipped to an article about the Center.

“The more I talked with my mother on the long drive, the more I became



Sally Graham

intrigued with the work of a place called the Center for the Study of Southern Culture.” Graham says. “Finally, my mother said, ‘Let’s just go to Oxford!’ So we made a detour.”

Graham liked what she saw in Oxford and applied immediately for the fall of 1990. While in the MA program, she participated in the Ichauway Documentary Project, a two-year study of the traditional culture of a 28,000-acre quail hunting reserve and ecological research site in Baker County, Georgia,

and ultimately based her thesis, which she describes as “an ethnography about an African American woman pastor and her church community,” on the Ichauway work.

Her experience at Ichauway then led Graham to Duke University’s Center for Documentary Studies, where Graham conducted interviews with African Americans about their experiences in the Jim Crow South. Some of those interviews are included in the book *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Tell about Life in the Segregated South*.

Graham says her work in the MA program was a natural progression for her: “I think the Southern Studies master’s program offers a solid framework for intellectual inquiry and personal discovery. I grew up respecting the stories of my ancestors, visiting gravesites and Alabama plantations, and asking questions, lots of questions.”

And of course, as a writer for CNN International she’s still asking lots of questions, questions she says are always framed by her graduate work at Ole Miss.

“From sharing mussels in Brussels with the poet laureate of Eritrea to visiting the slave forts of Ghana as a guest of Conservation International, I have taken the multidisciplinary approach to understanding Southern culture and applied it to my work as a writer.”

JENNIFER SOUTHALL

Student Photographs to Be Exhibited in Local Libraries

Forty-eight photographs made by students in last fall’s Southern Studies documentary photography seminar will be exhibited this fall and winter in the libraries of four of the towns the class photographed. Organized by Ann King, librarian at the Jesse Yancy

Memorial Library in Bruce, Mississippi, the exhibition will be shown in Bruce during the month of October and then will travel to Pontotoc (November 1-30), Water Valley (December 1-January 6), and New Albany (January 7-February 4).

The students whose photographs are included are Robert Caldwell, Sean Hughes, Nathan Kosub, Andrew Leventhal, Mary Margaret Miller, Susie Penman, Renna Tuten, and Robin Yekaitis.

SFA Oral History Work Recognized on Southern Artistry Web Site

The work of Amy Evans, oral historian for the Southern Foodways Alliance, was recently selected for inclusion on SouthernArtistry.org, a Web site dedicated to “outstanding artists of all disciplines that live and work in the region.”

“This is great exposure for the Southern Foodways Alliance’s Oral History Initiative and for telling stories about food arts in the South,” says Evans, who works out of the University of Mississippi’s Center for the Study of Southern Culture, where SFA is housed and where she received a master’s degree in Southern Studies in 2003.

Text and images from Evans’s oral history work on Greek food in Birmingham, tamales in the Mississippi Delta, the barbecue of Tennessee, and more can be found on the site alongside samplings from dozens of other Southern artists, whose disciplines range from dance to the literary arts.

“It’s good to know about these people who are doing such wonderful and creative work all over the South,” Evans says. “It’s nice for everyone to be recognized in one place, and, of course, it’s nice to be recognized individually.”

This isn’t the first time Evans has been recognized individually for her oral history work. She was featured in the November 2004 issue of *Food & Wine* magazine as one of 35 recipients of the publication’s “Tastemaker Award.” That list included the country’s most “fabulously creative people” involved in the food arts, according to senior editor Kate Krader.

John T. Edge, SFA director, says that all of Evans’s recognition “is a validation of her work and above all her sensitivity to her subjects. We’re especially proud since we hired her as a full-time oral historian in July.” (Previously Evans directed the SFA’s Oral History Initiative on a freelance basis.)

Besides samples on the SouthernArtistry Web site, full transcripts and images of Evans’s work can be found on SFA’s site, www.southernfoodways.com. Complete information on the SFA and the Oral History Initiative can also be found there.

JENNIFER SOUTHALL



Amy Evans

Kurt Streeter

New Addition to the Southern Studies Empire

Congratulations to Sarah Torian (MA 1997) and Bland Whitley (MA 1996) on the birth of Samuel Mason Whitley on June 17, 2005. Mason is the first offspring of two Southern Studies alums. Center faculty, students, and friends are awaiting their visit to Oxford for what Bland describes as “an appropriate ‘southron’ ceremony—baptism with the use of Elvis sweat on the porch of City Grocery, perhaps.”

Bland is now a research fellow with the Library of Virginia, working with a staff that is publishing a *Dictionary of Virginia Biographies*. Sarah is an independent consultant with the Annie E. Casey Foundation and provides research and writing support for their work to benefit low-income children and families in Atlanta.



Southern Studies alums show off their new baby, Mason Whitley

Angel Gets His Wings

Southern Studies master's program graduate Angel Ysaguirre recently joined the Boeing Company's headquarters in Chicago as Community and Education Relations Specialist. At Boeing, Ysaguirre will be charged with awarding grants to Chicago nonprofit organizations, including those focused on arts and cultural programs as well as civic education. Previously, Ysaguirre spent six years at the Illinois Humanities Council as Director of Programs and Partnerships.

Ysaguirre earned his master's in Southern Studies from Ole Miss in 1996 after receiving his undergraduate degree in English from Florida's Stetson University. He says that although his professional work has not been directly related to his Southern Studies coursework, he's put to good use the research and writing skills he learned at Ole Miss. "The process that one learns is what I've used at my jobs," he says.

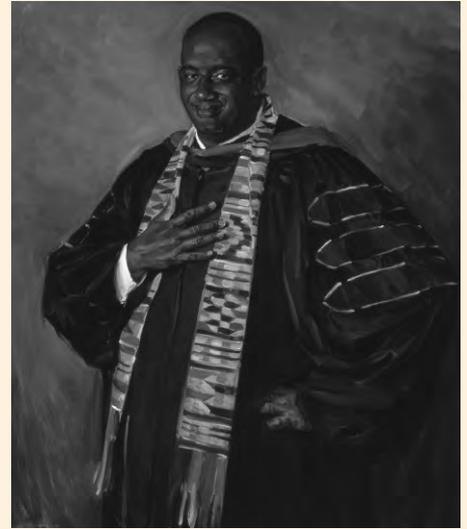
JENNIFER SOUTHALL

Center Gift Honors Edmonds

Mike Edmonds, an Ole Miss alumnus and former assistant dean of students, was recently honored with a \$10,000 gift in his name to the Center's Endowment for the Future of the South. Given by Matthew Burkley, a friend of Edmonds's from Cambridge, Massachusetts, the gift will go toward helping support the new initiative that aims to bring together leaders of the American South to explore collaboratively ways to advance the region's development.

Edmonds, who received a bachelor's degree in theater arts/speech communication as well as master's and doctoral degrees in higher education from Ole Miss, served the University as assistant professor of theater, director of student programming, and Student Union programming director before being named assistant dean of students. In 1991 Edmonds left Ole Miss to take on the roles of dean of students and professor of drama at Colorado College. In August, he was named Colorado College's vice president for student life/dean of students.

During his career Edmonds has received numerous awards, including the State of Mississippi Joint House and Senate Commendatory Resolution and the American Cancer Society's St. George Medal.



Mike Edmonds. Portrait by Jason Bouldin

JENNIFER SOUTHALL

New Ventress Order Members

The Center is pleased to announce that Jim and Ward Sumner of Jackson and Michelle Oakes of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, have recently joined the Ventress Order, an organization that administers gifts to departments within the University's College of Liberal Arts. The Sumners and Oakes have directed their Ventress Order gifts to the Center.

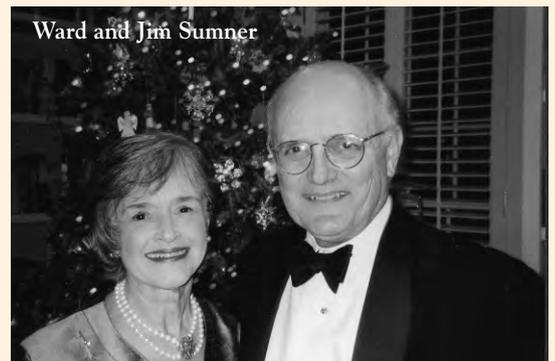
Jim and Ward Sumner, who are natives of Greenwood and Winona, respectively, have for the past 11 years lived in Jackson, where Jim is a U.S. magistrate. Ward, who studied art history at Vassar, said that supporting the arts by way of the Center is important to both her and Jim, a graduate of Washington and Lee and the Ole Miss law school.

"I've been a fan of the Center for a long time," says Ward, who recently

joined the Center's advisory committee. "I've had friends whose children were in the Southern Studies Program at the very beginning, and I was so impressed with the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*."

Michelle Oakes, a New Orleans native and Ole Miss graduate, is also a new advisory committee member as well as a longtime fan of the Center. "The Center is a center of excellence doing work of great importance," she says.

Oakes, who moved to Chapel Hill last year to start her own company rehabilitating properties after a decade working for large corporations, says that she gave to the Ventress Order because it's a "great way to give back": "The Ventress Order is a terrific vehicle to demonstrate a commitment to both the Center and Ole Miss."



Named in honor of James Alexander Ventress, a founding father of the University, the Ventress Order encourages recognition of the College of Liberal Arts as one of the country's outstanding centers of learning. For more information about giving to departments within the College of Liberal Arts, please call Josh Davis, advancement associate for the College of Liberal Arts, at 662-915-5944 or 800-340-9542.

JENNIFER SOUTHALL

Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha 2005: “Faulkner’s Inheritance”

As a Southern writer and as a writer known for his representations of history and of characters obsessed with it, the theme of “inheritance” in Faulkner seemed not only fitting but inevitable. “Inheritance”—what it is made of, and what it means to those who receive it—had been his primary subject from the beginning, and certainly one of the subjects most studied by scholars. Particularly noteworthy, then, about the 32nd annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference was the emergence of facets of that inheritance that had scarcely been touched on before.

Adam Gussow put forth a series of Faulkner texts, including “That Evening Sun” and “Pantaloon in Black,” that are surprisingly susceptible to a reading informed by the “blues” tradition; Judith Sensibar explored the impact on Faulkner of his future wife Estelle’s creative work in the 1920s, before he had found his fictional voice; Elizabeth Cornell introduced the theories of Albert Einstein as possible background for the Quentin section of *The Sound and the Fury*; Martin Kreiswirth proposed a new dimension of Freud to Faulkner criticism by introducing the “Uncanny” to the reading of *Absalom, Absalom!*; and Reginald Martin raised new questions regarding the motivation of Charles Bon in the same novel by pointing out the great differences between Louisiana’s lenient codes for people of Creole background and those of Mississippi, where Bon would become “by state law his own father’s black slave.”

Other scholars added new layers to Faulkner’s inheritance by reopening already treated perspectives: Susan Donaldson on the “culture of segregation”; Brittany Powell on the Quixotic hero; Lael Gold on the two strands of Faulkner’s Bible reading, the oral African American Bible and the written white one. Other scholars, including Jay Parini, Peter Robert Brown, Jonathan Howland, Jon Smith, Matthew Sutton, and Priscilla Wald, assessed the impact of Charles Dickens’s *Hard Times*, oral culture, material culture in and outside Yoknapatawpha, and Faulkner’s



Ryan Whittington

“Faulkner in Oxford” moderator Elizabeth Shiver (from left) with panelists Harter Williams Crutcher, Mildred Murray Douglas Hopkins, Dr. Ray J. Nichols, Carl S. Downing, and William Lewis



Ryan Whittington

Conference participants looking at Seth Berner’s Faulkner book display

deep concern with “apocalyptic fear” as an undisclosed quality in the United States. Finally, Noel Polk complicated the idea of inheritance by analyzing Faulkner’s quest for some kind of “originating moment,” when he could write without the influence of anyone or any preceding event.

In addition to the formal presentations, John Maxwell performed an abridged version of his acclaimed monologue “Oh, Mr. Faulkner, Do You Write?” and Sam Apple read his winning entry in the Faux

Faulkner Contest, “The Administration and the Fury: If William Faulkner Were Writing on the Bush White House.” Seth Berner, a book dealer from Portland, Maine, conducted a session on “Collecting Faulkner,” and Colby Kullman moderated “Faulkner on the Fringe” at the Southside Gallery. “Oxford Remembers,” coordinated by Elizabeth Shiver, brought together six Oxonians for reminiscence of the Faulkner family and Oxford as it was when Faulkner lived here. A highlight of the conference continued to be the “Teaching Faulkner” sessions conducted this year by James B. Carothers, Terrell L. Tebbetts, Theresa Towner, and Charles A. Peek.

Other events included two art exhibitions: *Faulkner Prints* by Boyd Saunders at the University Museum and *Whispering Pines*, a collection of photographs by Birney Imes, at Barnard Observatory. There were also guided tours of North Mississippi, an opening dinner at historic Memory House, and a closing party at Square Books.

As is always the case with major artists, the “inheritance” continues to expand, part of the past that, as Faulkner put it, is “not even past.”

DONALD M. KARTIGANER



SOUTHERN FOODWAYS REGISTER

The Newsletter of the Southern Foodways Alliance

Hurricane Katrina – SFA Responds

SFA has partnered with CIRA (the Council of Independent Restaurants) and the James Beard Foundation to build a job bank for displaced restaurant workers. Approximately 60 SFA members volunteered to phone Beard Foundation member restaurants. They asked that the restaurant offer a minimum of one job to displaced workers. They explained that each offer should come with a promise of temporary housing and that the employee will likely need help with relocation funds, too. Job offers are posted at www.cirajobs.com. Anyone may view jobs online. To post a job offer to the site, retrieve the password from www.southernfoodways.com.

New Oral Histories Online

A survey of the bartenders of New Orleans, underwritten by Southern Comfort and collected by SFA oral historian Amy Evans, is now online. Viewed in the light of the recent tragedy, they are especially poignant.

Lyndhurst Foundation Grant

The Lyndhurst Foundation of Chattanooga, Tennessee, which had its beginnings in the philanthropic activities of Thomas Cartter Lupton, a pioneer in the Coca-Cola bottling business, has awarded SFA a grant of \$5,000 for general support. SFA deeply appreciates the gift. Visit their Web site at www.lyndhurstfoundation.org.

Full-time SFA Oral Historian Hired

University of Mississippi Chancellor Robert Khayat awarded SFA a one-time development grant of \$30,000. Those funds, combined with an ongoing \$15,000 annual grant from Birmingham-based Jim 'N Nick's Bar-B-Que, fueled the hire of SFA's first full-time oral historian. Amy Evans, who built the program, first as a Southern Studies graduate student and later as a freelancer, began work in late July.

Tim O'Brien's New Albums

This fall, look for *two* full albums of American folk by singer and songwriter and SFA member Tim O'Brien, *Cornbread Nation* and *Fiddler's Green*. The title track for *Cornbread Nation* was written especially for SFA and draws a parallel between traditional food and music—subjects dear to O'Brien's heart. Other songs on the album, like "Long Black Veil," "House of the Rising Sun," and "Busted," showcase his knack for interpreting contemporary songs and making them his own.

From the President

Dear SFA Members,
First, my profound thanks and congratulations to all in New Orleans who put together an amazing event. The Field Trip was imagined and executed by an all-volunteer crew including Lolis Eric Elie, Sara Roahen, Brett Anderson, Sarah O'Kelley, Brooks Hamaker, Scott Simmons, Poppy Tooker, Liz Williams, Elizabeth Pearce, Matt Konigsmark, Pableaux Johnson, Susan Tucker, and the Eversmeyer family. Marcelle Bienvenue provided wonderful insight into the sugar cane industry and the people behind it. Our sponsors—Tabasco and Southern Comfort—enabled us to do it with panache and at an affordable price.

Many of our members who wanted to join us in New Orleans but could not will be happy to know your board is working hard to address this challenge. One of the ideas we've begun implementing is a series of regional dinners, kind of mini Field Trips. We're calling them Day Camps, and the first one, lovingly named Camp Bacon, took place on September 16 in Louisville. To learn more, point your browser to www.southernfoodways.com. Going forward, Angie Mosier is helping members organize their own events. If you'd like to initiate a dinner, contact Angie at food@angiemosier.com.

Our oral history work is progressing. In the coming months Amy Evans will be working with, among other groups, tamale makers in Mississippi and beekeepers in Florida. Looking toward to our May 18–21, 2006, Field Trip to Apalachicola, Florida, she will be collecting histories from oystermen and fisherwomen.

And please keep Southern Foodways in mind when you think about charitable giving. We have so much work to do and so few resources! The organization needs and appreciates your support.

Yours around the table,
Elizabeth Sims

Bacon Producers of Kentucky

Text and Photographs by Amy Evans

In Kentucky, curing bacon and hams has been a necessity of life for generations. In more recent years, this tradition has been in retreat. Some blame onerous government regulations. Others see urbanization as the culprit. Others still ponder our region's evolving food habits. There remain, however, a select few artisans who cling faithfully to family traditions. By way of generations-old recipes, hands-on expertise, and time sweet time, a small number of folks are still doing things the old-fashioned way. As a means of survival, these purveyors of bacon, whose families once cured by necessity, are now catering to gourmards and chefs who appreciate both the effort invested and the end result. They are carrying forth the tradition.

Amy Evans, oral historian for the Southern Foodways Alliance, interviewed eight of these artisans as part of a project sponsored by grants from Birmingham-based Jim 'N Nick's Bar-B-Que and the University of Mississippi. Sketches and photographs of three bacon producers and the names and businesses of five others interviewed are presented below. The entire project, with audio clips from each interview, can be found at www.southernfoodways.com.

Colonel Bill Newsom's Aged Country Ham

Nancy Newsom Mahaffey

Nancy Newsom Mahaffey, known far and wide as The Ham Lady, is one of the few women who dry-cures pork. Her family has been curing ham in the town of Princeton, Kentucky, for generations. H. C. Newsom, Nancy's grandfather, worked from a cure, handed down in an 18th-century family will. Before long, he was selling hams and bacon in the family-owned general store. Eventually, his son, Colonel Bill Newsom, started working on his own and developed a traditional sugar cure, which caught the attention of famous eaters like James Beard. Nancy grew up learning the value of tradition and the secret to her father's success. Today, she carries on her father's legacy in the same store, curing the same way, in



the same ham house, catering to some of the same customers who have frequented Newsom's Old Mill Store for decades.

Father's Country Hams

Charles Gatton Jr.

Charles Gatton Jr. is known to some as the mad scientist of bacon. Growing up on Gatton Farms, in Bremen, Kentucky, Charles learned the business of curing hams and bacon from his father, Charles Gatton Sr., who founded Father's Country Hams in 1950. When his father passed away in 2000, Charles Jr. decided to take bacon-making to another level. His epiphany occurred at a food show, when chocolate purveyors asked if he could create a chocolate-flavored bacon. Charles Jr. returned home and began toying with different products, eventually getting his hands on some flavorings that he could use in his dry-cure process. Today, Gatton Farms makes 10 flavors of bacon, including apple cinnamon and

Broadbent's Hams

..... Ronny and Beth Drennan

Father's Country Hams

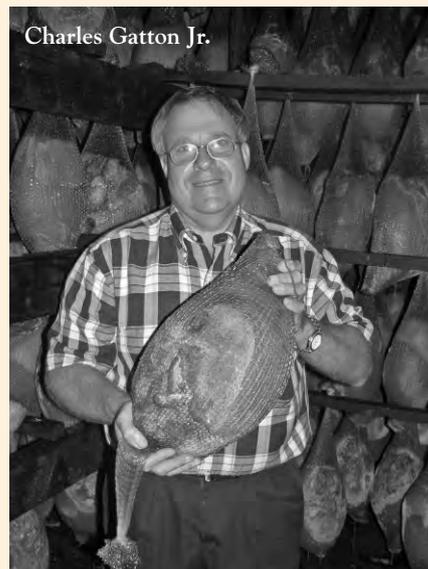
..... Lorene Gatton

Meacham Hams

..... Rodman Meacham

Scott Hams

..... Leslie Scott



vanilla bourbon, but no chocolate—yet. And, yes, they still offer the traditional hickory and pepper bacons.

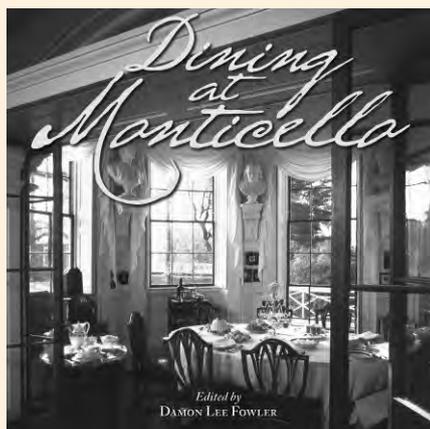
Meacham Hams

William Meacham

Ninety-two-year-old William Meacham started Meacham Hams 50 fifty years ago. His grandfather used to provide hogs to tenant farmers, and each year the Meacham family hosted a community hog killing to process the meat. When William was a young boy, his grandmother handed him the family cookbook with the cure recipe in it, and William became responsible for curing the hams and bacon on the farm. After he was married, he began giving his cured hams to relatives as Christmas gifts. In the late 1950s, the business of Meacham Hams was born. For decades, William has produced a traditional hickory-smoked country bacon but with a little less salt and a lot more flavor to sweeten the family cure. Today, William's son, Rodman Meacham, keeps watch over the ham house and the treasures within.



Eating the South



Dining at Monticello: In Good Taste and Abundance.

Edited and with Recipes Developed by Damon Lee Fowler. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. 208 pages, 120 color illustrations, 75 recipes. \$35.00 cloth.

Dining at Monticello contains two sections: essays and recipes. To explain how Thomas Jefferson's delight in French cuisine only complemented his love of American ingredients, editor Damon Lee Fowler says, "Clearly, he relished the best from both sides of the Atlantic." Women ran the household, and Jefferson hired Europeans to train his slaves in gardening. Slave James Heming trained with chefs in Paris, and Heming in turn trained cooks at Monticello. As president, Jefferson set the standard for entertaining in Washington.

Throughout his life, Jefferson paid careful attention to the acquisition of a huge variety of interesting foods, including over 300 types of vegetables. He toured the vineyards of France and also made tasting notes on Italian wines, Madeira, and Sherry. Historical explanations accompany all the recipes, which are attributed to relatives or to Jefferson himself. Beef Soup Monticello draws from "Observations on Soup," Jefferson's recording of classic French techniques. More French-inspired dishes include Braised Artichokes with Fine Herbs, Asparagus with Herb Vinaigrette, Beef à la Mode, and Blancmange. Other dishes, such as Catfish Soup, Okra Soup,

Baked Virginia Ham, Broiled Shad, Apple Fritters, and Pepper Vinegar made with Texas Bird Peppers, reveal American influences.

Dining at Monticello is a beautifully designed and fascinating way to learn history—a "feast of reason," as Jefferson's granddaughter Ellen Wayles Randolph would say.

KAREN CATHEY

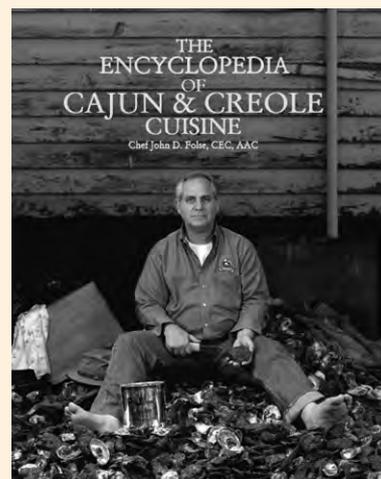
The Encyclopedia of Cajun and Creole Cuisine.

By Chef John D. Folse. Gonzales, Louisiana: Chef John D. Folse and Company Publishing, 2004. 849 pages, 735 recipes, approximately 700 photographs. \$49.95 cloth.

The Encyclopedia of Cajun and Creole Cuisine is a hefty book, both in weight (about ten pounds) and thoroughness in treating its subject. It is the self-described "birthright and obligation" of Chef John Folse, the man designated by the state legislature as "Louisiana's Culinary Ambassador to the World."

The 850-page cookbook, history text, photo album, and reference source is divided into three sections. The first devotes a chapter to each of the seven cultures that Folse identifies as having significantly contributed to the creation of the Cajun and Creole cuisines (Native America, France, Spain, Germany, England, Africa, and Italy). This section can be textbookish in spots, but the relevance of the historical information does ultimately come through.

The second section is the sweet spot: the recipes (more than 700 of them). Folse's classic recipes are well written, often anecdotal, and cover everything from basic sauces to pig roasts to classic cocktails (often considered basic sauces in Louisiana). The recipes are divided into standard categories, but Folse is true to his mission, as when he devotes several pages to the creation and evolution of brunch.



The final chapters reveal Folse fulfilling his duties as Culinary Ambassador with tributes to the festivals, plantations, personalities, and local brands that exemplify, celebrate, and preserve the essence of Cajun and Creole cuisine.

It is impossible to describe this book without remarking on the striking photography. The best shot of all is the cover, in which Folse's take on a 1933 photo entitled "The Oysterman," has Folse perched, barefoot, atop a mound of spent oyster shells, looking like he may have eaten more than he's added to the oyster can. Snapshots and portraits of historical figures add personality to the historical material in the first section, and vibrant close-up shots of Ponchatoula strawberries and plump eggplants interspersed with the recipes will inspire even the most timid cooks.

ANGIE WHITE

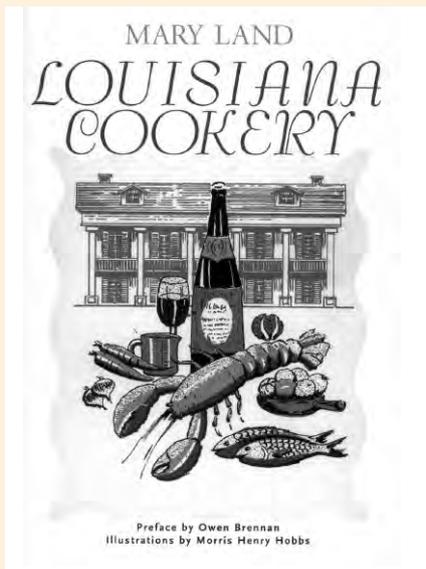
Louisiana Cookery.

By Mary Land. Illustrated by Morris Henry Hobbs. Preface by Owen Brennan. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2005. 376 pages. \$20 paper.

"The five requisite elements in Louisiana cookery, Mary Land contends in her classic 1954 book, are "the iron pot, the roux, stock, herbs, and alcoholic liquids." It is the directness and simplicity of such observations that give Mary Land's writing its authority

and her recipes their usefulness. Mary Land was a poet, a novelist, a journalist, and an outdoorsman. She realizes that any area's cooking exists at the intersection of culture—she recognizes the contribution of French, Spanish, Anglo-Saxon, Native American, and African American cultures to the cooking—and necessity—what the Native peoples and early settlers found and could raise in the northern hills and southern bayous.

The result is a book that is informative about the foodways of 50 years ago—few of us these days have sufficient access to game to makes recipes for muskrat casserole or ragout of bear or squirrel-head pot pie more than a curiosity. But other recipes feel very modern. Our age was not the first to discover that spoonbill catfish had roe that could be served as caviar. *Louisiana Cookery* is still a useful book for the contemporary Southern kitchen.



Cornbread, biscuits, hushpuppies, fried catfish or bream, chicken and dumplings, fried green tomatoes. The chapter on beverages is particularly interesting, not just a useful collection of cocktail recipes but a compendium of

recipes for domestically produced ratafias and cordials.

Mary Land begins *Louisiana Cookery* with a quotation from Harnett Kane, who points out in *Louisiana Hayride*, that “modern Louisiana is divided, as was the mother country, into three pasts: the South, the North, and The City—New Orleans.” Each has its own language, its own culture, and its own style of cooking. Mary Land was born in northwest Louisiana, and one of the delights of this book for me, who grew up that part of the world, is to see the cooking of North Louisiana treated with equal respect to that of its flashier cousins to the south.

The University Press of Mississippi is to be congratulated for bringing this classic book back to print and for including the original edition's charming illustrations by Morris Henry Hobbs.

THOMAS HEAD

SFA Contributors

KAREN CATHEY, proprietor of Bon Vivant in Arlington, Virginia, is a founding member of the Southern Foodways Alliance.

AMY EVANS is oral historian for the Southern Foodways Alliance. She is also an exhibiting artist, freelance photographer, and cofounder of PieceWorks, a nonprofit arts and outreach organization.

ELIZABETH SIMS, current SFA president, has been the communications director for the Biltmore Company in Asheville, North Carolina, since 1990. She holds a BA in English from Rhodes College and an MA in literature from the University of Arkansas.

THOMAS HEAD is the *Washingtonian* magazine's executive wine and food editor, one of its restaurant reviewers, and writes

regularly for the *Washingtonian* and other publications on food, drink, and travel.

ANGIE WHITE was born in Shreveport, Louisiana, and has lived the last 11 years in Washington, D.C., where she gets paid to do Latin American finance but really spends most of her time thinking about her next meal.

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Reading the South

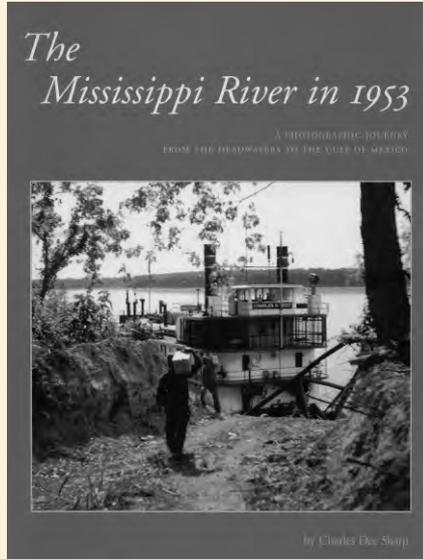
The Mississippi River in 1953: A Photographic Journey from the Headwaters to the Gulf of Mexico.

Photographs and journal entries by Charles Dee Sharp. Essays by John O. Anfinson. 222 pages, 118 black-and-white photographs, 63 color photographs. Santa Fe: Center for American Places, 2005. \$49.95 cloth.

Industrial Perspective: Photographs of the Gulf Coast.

Photographs and text by Andrew Borowiec. 128 pages, 51 tritone black-and-white plates. Santa Fe: Center for American Places, 2005. \$50.00 cloth.

These two recent offerings from the Center for American Places should both be of interest to students of the South. Charles Dee Sharp's *The Mississippi River in 1953* looks at the entire length of America's great river, following its course from Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. Implicit in the author's photographs and journal entries are comparisons of life and culture along various stretches of the river in the middle of the 20th century. Andrew Borowiec's *Industrial Perspective* looks at heavy industry—oil refineries, chemical plants, port facilities—along the Gulf Coast from Alabama to Texas. It too encourages readers to make comparisons, this time between our own stereotypically idyllic images of a lazy coastline drowsing in the sun and a collection of real-life industrial landscapes sometimes so



busy, complicated, and bizarre as to seem from another planet. Both books make extensive use of photographs. There, however, the similarities end.

The Mississippi River in 1953 is the product of two trips Charles Dee Sharp made down the Mississippi—the first on a towboat, the second by car—in 1953, when he was 25 and just out of the military. He undertook these trips as research for a film he hoped to make about a pair of newlyweds who spend their honeymoon rafting down the river. Sharp never got around to making his movie, but even half a century after his river travels, his book bubbles over with the same youthful enthusiasm that saw a honeymoon-on-the-Mississippi film as a can't-miss idea. He pointed his camera at just about everything—people, places, buildings, the river, and the land it flowed through. His photographs of people along the Mississippi include teenage girls in skirted bathing suits and rubber shower caps cavorting on a

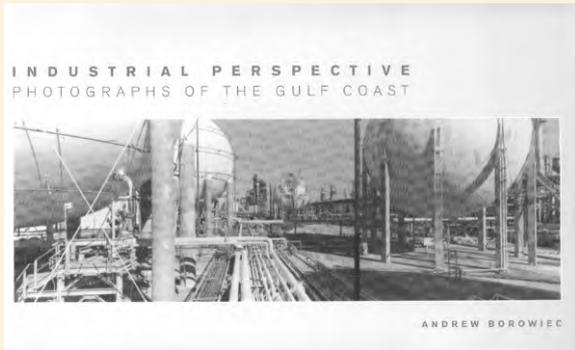
Wisconsin beach; boys in Missouri playing baseball; old men deep into a checkers game in an Iowa riverside park; cotton brokers grading cotton on Front Street in Memphis; women in long dresses, aprons, and straw hats fishing near Vicksburg, a paddlewheel steamboat in the background. One enigmatic image from the Mississippi Delta shows an African American woman in a pink dress clutching a brown paper bag and staring at what looks like a dinosaur skull perched atop a general store's potbelly stove. Among Sharp's best pictures are a series of portraits he made of the crew on the towboat on which he traveled downriver. He also photographed bridges, rail yards, river traffic, historic sites, statues, downtown business districts, and more, all up and down the river. It was voracious, often indiscriminate, vision that made up for a lack of sophistication and technical expertise with energy and enthusiasm.

Happily, *The Mississippi River in 1953* is more than just a photo album. Selected entries from Sharp's 1953 journal, excerpts from literary works by the likes of Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, and Pare Lorentz, and present-day commentary on the pictures combine with essays by historian John O. Anfinson to form a multifaceted treatment of life on and along the Mississippi. Put together in this manner five decades after Sharp's river travels, *The Mississippi River in 1953* is as much about a hopeful, prosperous, and potentially tranquil postwar America as it is about a classically American place. As with any work that treats the past

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gently, it may be open to charges of nostalgia or sentimentality, but critics should bear in mind that 1953 wasn't the past when Sharp made his trips down the river.

In contrast, Andrew Borowiec's *Industrial Perspective: Photographs of the Gulf Coast* is very much about the present—a heavily industrialized present not often associated with life in the South and unlikely to ever be an object of nostalgia. Borowiec is one of America's leading landscape photographers, especially of the human-made "cultural landscape." His previous book, *Along the Ohio River* (2000), explored towns on the Ohio River, many with histories of manufacturing that have left them with present-day cityscapes where residential neighborhoods and industrial sites exist side by side or, in some cases, interspersed among each other. It is a very fine book that speaks with great eloquence about the relationship between making a living and living a life.

Industrial Perspective, however, is in a different vein. Photographed between 1999 and 2003, Borowiec's views of industry on the Gulf Coast (and as far up the Mississippi as St. Francisville, Louisiana) are more distanced and on a less human scale than his Ohio River images. In part this is by necessity: industrial facilities in the Gulf region tend to be larger, more isolated, and, by design, separate from where their employees live. As such, they don't make for landscapes that people seem a part of. Borowiec tries to mitigate this somewhat: we occasionally see

tiny human figures off to one side of the frame; or unimposing, low-tech objects—bicycles in a few images, a telephone booth in another—lost and incongruous among bewildering jumbles of industrial hardware.

He even shows us a couple of backyards with the requisite playhouse or swing set, the looming industrial presence barely kept at bay in the very near distance. But these kinds of pictures are the exception rather than the rule. All in all, most of the photographs in *Industrial Perspective* are visual appreciations of the industrial sites themselves rather than about their relationship to the world around them. In this sense, they are not as complex or as thought-provoking as the images from Borowiec's earlier book.

Borowiec's approach, of course, is markedly different from Sharp's. Unlike *The Mississippi River in 1953*, *Industrial Perspective* is a purely photographic vision. With the exception of the author's brief introduction and the pictures' titles, Borowiec's images are unmediated by words. The photographs are reproduced (beautifully) one per two-page spread, allowing viewers to focus on the individual pictures, one at a time. And they're very much worth focusing on. All are impeccably seen, with multiple points of interest spread throughout the frame. Made with a medium format panoramic camera (befitting the Gulf Coast's overwhelmingly horizontal landscape) and not enlarged to any great degree, they are rich with detail and delicacy of tone. They are lovely to look at. They are works of art. And this is where *Industrial Perspective*—with its purity of vision and photographic sophistication—is more rewarding than *The Mississippi River in 1953*.

Borowiec has managed to reveal some hard truths about a particular part of the contemporary Southern landscape while simultaneously endowing it with a certain measure of beauty. This is a balance that's difficult to achieve and surely one of the hallmarks of fine documentary art. In this case, one hopes that Borowiec's pictures are not so beautiful that they obscure the harsh set of realities—economic, environmental, political—their subject matter derives from.

DAVID WHARTON

**Lost Delta Found:
Rediscovering the Fisk
University–Library of
Congress Coahoma County
Study, 1941–1942.**

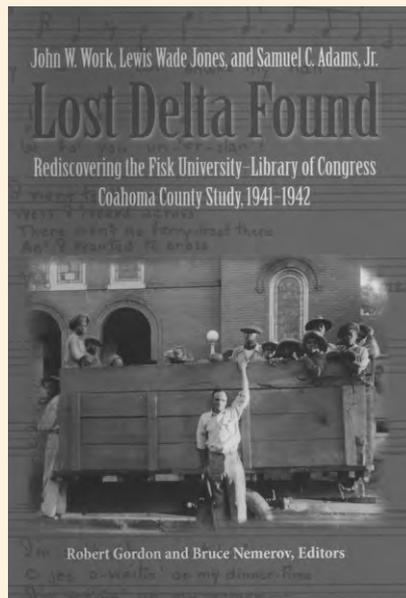
By John W. Work, Lewis Wade Jones, and Samuel C. Adams Jr.
Edited by Robert Gordon and Bruce Nemerov. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2005. 344 pages. \$34.95 cloth.

To call *Lost Delta Found* a companion piece to Alan Lomax's award-winning *The Land Where the Blues Began* (1993) is like calling Alice Randall's scathing parody *The Wind Done Gone* (2002) the sequel to Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*. Although editors Robert Gordon and Bruce Nemerov struggle to be fair to the Great White Folklorist, they're on a frankly revisionist mission here, determined to decenter Lomax, critique his misnarration of a key period in the history of blues ethnography, and put "the other guy," as they call John W. Work, on the map. Three other guys, in fact: African American academics, Southern-born, and based at Fisk, all three of them members—along with the ever-calculating and voracious Lomax—of what the

Library of Congress has called “the first racially mixed field study in the Deep South.”

Southern-born white men in the Jim Crow South were not notably skillful at sharing power with African American colleagues at a time and in a context where the word “colleagues” itself was scandalous. Lomax, more skillful than most, nevertheless finds his missteps large and small inventoried by Gordon and Nemerov in this volume’s introduction: he came late to a field project in the Mississippi Delta that musicologist Work and sociologist Lewis Wade Jones had already dreamed up; used the power of his own affiliation with the Library of Congress to wrest control from his Fisk associates; stepped on Work’s metaphorical toes during a famous 1941 interview with bluesman McKinley “Muddy Water” Morganfield at Stovall Plantation; misidentified Morganfield as “Muddy Waters” when he later issued these field recordings; allowed Work, Jones, and graduate assistant Samuel Adams to transcribe his recordings and report their findings in extensive unpublished manuscripts that somehow disappeared into the Lomax archives; and then—most damning by far—incorporated much of this joint-stock material decades later into *The Land Where the Blues Began* without crediting his three black colleagues.

The heart of *Lost Delta Found* is simply these unpublished manuscripts, discovered by Gordon when he was researching his recent biography of Waters and presented here for the first time, six decades after they went missing. They are stirring, enlightening, often brilliantly interpreted presentations of black cultural life in the mid-century Mississippi Delta. Jones, for example, uses the personal narratives he helped gather to discern attitudinal differences that distinguished three successive



African American generations: the pioneers in their 70s and 80s who cleared and settled the Delta, used the Mississippi River as transportation, and dwelled comfortably with frontier violence; an intermediate sharecropping generation in their 50s and 60s that built churches, traveled on trains, and frowned on frontier misrule; and a third generation between 30 and 50 that “[rattles] about in the second-hand cars their cotton money bought,” listens to the latest pop hits on Seeburg (or “Sea Bird”) jukeboxes, and dwells in the modern disorder that prevails between the wars.

Work’s manuscript, which includes more than a hundred transcriptions of spirituals, blues, ballads, work songs, game songs, and long-lined hymns, explores the inner workings of both sacred and secular spaces within the Delta—the black church and its sermonizing preachers, black juke joints and the guitarists and harmonica players who struggle to negotiate the shifting musical tastes of their restless public. Adams’s contribution, a master’s thesis at Fisk titled “Changing Negro Life in the Delta,” polls a hundred sharecroppers on the King and Anderson plantation near Clarksdale and discovers, among

other things, that the “favorite radio musicians” in 1941 are the Golden Gate Quartet, Cab Calloway, Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller, Gene Autry, Memphis Minnie, and Roy Acuff and his Smoky Mountain Boys.

Not quite the brutalized, embittered, suffocatingly Jim Crowed Southland that Lomax depicts in *The Land Where the Blues Began*, in other words, but a rich, vibrant, fully-encultured world of black strivers and seekers who created a world of their own and lived large lives regardless. It’s all here, in this superb and needed book: much too late, but right on time.

ADAM GUSSOW

Divine Agitators: The Delta Ministry and Civil Rights in Mississippi.

By Mark Newman. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004. 376 pages. \$54.95 cloth, \$22.95 paper.

In his second book, historian Mark Newman inspects the Delta Ministry, which the National Council of Churches established in 1964 as a servant ministry in Mississippi. The Delta Ministry (DM) has probably been overlooked by many historians because it appeared at the end of the first Freedom Summer, and the sordid events of that tumultuous season have dominated many accounts of the Mississippi civil rights movement. Newman reexamines the DM and pays special attention to its guiding philosophy of meeting the needs of the poor and acting as a home mission service to Mississippi’s African American community. The book provides a thoroughly researched and descriptive account of the organization’s evolution and attempts to incorporate the larger

story of civil rights activity in the state as well.

Newman begins the book with a brief introduction to the National Council of Churches and the DM's goal of serving Mississippi's blacks. At its inception, the DM theoretically operated "as a religious equivalent of SNCC [Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee]," but the organization soon took on a variety of nonsectarian chores. Between 1964 and 1965 the Delta Ministry involved itself in voter registration, community organizing, and citizenship education classes. The DM also dispensed food and clothing to the needy and created the Child Development Group of Mississippi. The Delta Ministry raised funds to supply black hospitals with modern medical equipment and established the Delta Foundation that allocated grant funds for small business growth.

Newman includes three case studies on the cities of Hattiesburg, McComb, and Greenville, which helps in understanding how the DM worked at the local level. Newman's examination of the DM's activity within the towns reveals how easily the civil rights movement could lose cohesion. In Hattiesburg, for example, blacks became divided along class lines when white leaders granted concessions to upper- and middle-class African Americans but ignored the needs of the poor. By 1967 the Delta Ministry had also failed to create an adequate infrastructure to guarantee school desegregation in the city and pulled out before several objectives had been secured.

Perhaps the best aspect of *Divine Agitators* is Newman's honesty in relating both the victories and the disappointments of the Delta Ministry. The DM seems to have been successful at distributing food, forcing state and federal authorities to allot food, and at implementing Head Start programs. In 1966 the DM drew

national attention to the plight of Delta blacks when it supported the famous occupation of the Greenville Air Force Base. Newman counters all the Delta Ministry successes with the organization's failures. The DM supported the Mississippi Freedom Labor Union when it decided to strike, which proved unrealistic, organized a nearly disastrous communal farming project called "Freedom City," and routinely failed to attract necessary funding from both the Office of Economic Opportunity and the denominations of the National Council of Churches.

Newman's study provides a fuller account of the Delta Ministry, which historian James F. Findlay Jr. touched on in his *Church People in the Struggle* (1993). Newman revives historical interest in the DM, but readers may still wish to refer to Findlay's book for a better explanation of the National Council of Churches' role in the black freedom struggle. Although the title of Newman's work—"divine agitators"—suggests a focus on religion in the civil rights movement, he admits that religious worship and personal religious beliefs were uncommon in the DM, and the importance of religious beliefs among DM organizers and workers escapes the book.

Divine Agitators manages to provide, however, a much needed account of the South's largest civil rights group by 1967. Newman's study is also the best account of the National Council of Churches' operations on the local level. Even though the DM suffered from quarrels among its leaders and from a host of other problems, it showed an ability to adapt to changing circumstances in the state. Newman's attention to the shifting nature of the organization and its many economic initiatives to relieve the impoverished black Mississippian community shows how Mississippi has been slow to realize full racial equality. Newman's work

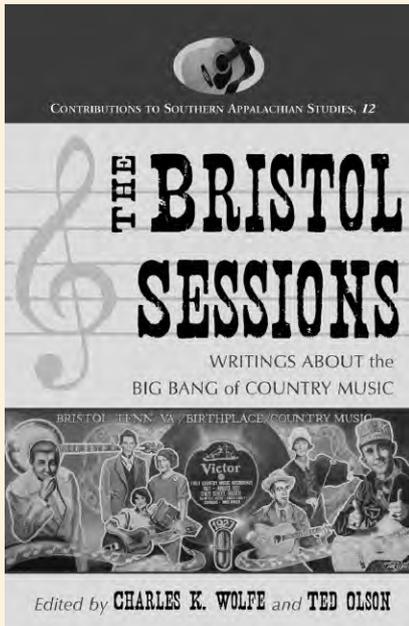
should please anyone interested in Mississippi civil rights activity as well as scholars searching for more accounts of the organizations that helped in the freedom struggle.

WILLIAM HUSTWIT

***The Bristol Sessions:
Writings about the Big Bang
of Country Music.***

Edited by Charles K. Wolfe and Ted Olson. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2005. 296 pages. \$30.00 paper.

By compiling 19 essays, both old and new, Charles K. Wolfe and Ted Olson have attempted to clarify the significance and to trace the subsequent influences of Ralph Peer's 1927 field recording sessions, which Johnny Cash hailed as "the single most important event in the history of country music." That historic venue established a musical dynasty that reverberates to this day and launched the careers of two superstar acts of early country music: Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family. The book details every artist recorded by the Victor Talking Machine Company in Bristol, Tennessee, but the names Rodgers and Carter, probably because of their huge commercial successes, are repeated like a litany. Peer's two discoveries probably had such widespread appeal because they represented popular but conflicting aspects of Southern rural culture. The Singing Brakeman yodeled about "living the wild life," but the Carters harmonized, often in the "old ballad tradition," about subjects "morally and spiritually instructive." Wolfe asserts that the sessions "may not have ushered in a new type of music, but they did usher in a new musical era as well as a new way of perceiving and merchandising rural Southern white music."



The five sections of the book proffer a balance of biographical, anecdotal, and technical writings from both primary and secondary sources. Part 1 elucidates the state of recording technology at that time and traces the evolution of the Victor Talking Machine Company. Part 2 offers not only details of Ralph Peer's organization of the sessions, but also biographical sketches of the individuals and groups recorded. Anchoring part 3 are reminiscences provided by Ralph Peer and some of the artists' relatives, including Rodgers's wife, Carrie, and A. P. Carter's daughter Gladys. Part 4, the only section with music and lyrics, contains two rather technical musicological studies. One explains how Ernest Stoneman creatively adapted commercially published material to his individual style. The second analyzes how Jimmie Rodgers and Alfred Karnes "were more vocally inventive and expressive, as well as more stylistically progressive, than the others" at the sessions. Part 5 follows up with extensive tables listing the performances Peer recorded in Bristol in 1928, as well as those garnered in 1928-29 by Columbia in Johnson City,

Tennessee. The book closes with Olson and Kalra arguing that the musical traditions springing out of the Bristol sessions are still alive in the region, particularly at East Tennessee State University, whose music department has instituted a Bluegrass Program and whose Sherrod Library houses the extensive Burton-Manning collection of regionally collected material.

The Bristol Sessions contains photographs, an excellent index, and copious bibliographical citations—all of which provide a wealth of information useful to students as well as scholars. With country music's becoming a galactic industry, and Peer's 1927 recordings apparently being the seminal point from which the industry expanded, it seems appropriate that the editors employ Nolan Porterfield's oft-quoted stellar image to describe the Bristol Sessions as the "Big Bang of Country Music."

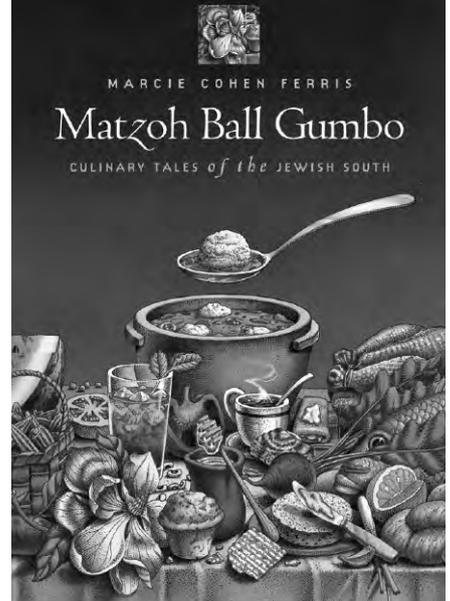
MICHAEL DAVENPORT

Bridging Southern Cultures: An Interdisciplinary Approach.

Edited by John Lowe. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005. 317 pages. \$49.95 cloth.

This intriguing collection edited by John Lowe, professor of English at LSU, is notable for showing the academic concerns of senior scholars who have been studying the South for the past 25 years. Most of the authors of the 14 essays in *Bridging Southern Cultures* are full professors, and many of their essays not only analyze topics in Southern literature, art, music, history, and sociology but also address the state of the scholarly

"Delectable from start to finish."*



Matzoh Ball Gumbo
Culinary Tales of the Jewish South
MARCIE COHEN FERRIS

"A fascinating journey to dinner tables throughout the Mississippi Delta, Charleston, and beyond. Over four centuries, southern and Jewish cultures have mingled, resulting in Pecan Kugel and Pesach Fried Green Tomatoes. A delicious and sometimes poignant world emerges, complete with the history, stories, and recipes from this unique cultural cross-section of southern Jews."

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"Marcie Cohen Ferris does for the ethnography of food in the Jewish South what Jessica Harris has done for African Diaspora cooking."

—Dale Rosengarten, coeditor of *A Portion of the People**

344 pp., 79 illus. \$29.95 cloth

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profession and how it has changed and should change.

What unifies these essays and gives the volume its title is the interest in bridging gaps in the topics and approaches in studying the South. This generation of scholars was the group who broke down scholarly conventions that had long viewed studying the South as a process of studying the concerns of white men. The concept of Southern identity, most obviously, had long seemed the possession of the white men in charge of the region. The scholars in this volume took part in revolutions in African American studies, women's studies and then gender studies, and the ever-changing languages of cultural studies; they established new fields of study by expanding the range of both topics to study and ways to study those topics. It is important that the book's title refers not to Southern culture but to Southern cultures, taking note of the region's diversity. Here they are concerned with bridges not just between groups and not just between academic disciplines but also between older and newer scholarly questions.

Many of the more intriguing, challenging essays take on conventional notions of how to study the South, but twist them or expand them in new directions. William Andrews asks the same questions of four Mississippi autobiographers—two African American and two white—and finds them converging and diverging in surprising ways. Addressing the old notion of a Southern fascination with home, Thadious Davis analyzes recent attempts by African American authors to claim the South as home as a creative practice rather than an act of nostalgia. Editor Lowe returns to the old idea of the plantation myth in order to show how a range of critics adopted the myth in order to critique it. In

an essay entitled "The Burden of Southern Culture," Charles Reagan Wilson expands C. Vann Woodward's argument to addresses issues of biracial concern. Daniel Littlefield returns to old battles over the continuity of African into African American culture to think how contemporary scholars can make use of those issues. Anne Goodwyn Jones discusses how scholars in cultural theory and regional studies have not engaged each other very well, and offers some hope that scholars of the South can learn more from new approaches.

Other essays offer good examples of recent scholarship on topics in Southern culture. Bertram Wyatt-Brown offers a sophisticated reading of the depression, drinking, and creativity of William Faulkner. Sue Bridwell Beckham's detailed analysis of the gender issues in the creation of the Southern images in WPA murals, Joyce Marie Jackson's discussion of quartet singing by Southern African Americans, and Richard Megraw's study of artist Ellsworth Woodward all apply the insights of a generation of scholarship to their topics.

Bridging Southern Cultures does not offer a method for what scholars should do next. Its authors are not searching for some key ingredient to define the South; surely it is significant that no one offers what regional scholars used to see as their mission—a key to Southern distinctiveness. Encouraging the study of all groups from many perspectives, it has an open, welcoming approach to studying the South, and it is an intriguing volume both for what it says about specific topics and for what it shows about the changing state of Southern scholarship.

TED OWNBY

Southern Seen: Meditations on Past and Present.

By Larry T. McGehee. Foreword by John Egerton. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005. 368 pages. \$15.95 paper.

Among the least studied and yet most intriguing contributions to Southern culture are the works of newspaper columnists. These writers take on the demanding responsibility of commenting on local community life. Often writing daily, the columnist relays stories, raises civic issues, provides a chronicle of events, comments on social mores, and, in general, becomes the voice of the community where the paper appears.

Larry T. McGehee writes out of this tradition, but he takes the column to a high art. For years I've been reading his columns written for a hundred small-town Southern newspapers, as he would send collections of recent writings for circulation at the Center. I thus always knew him as a sage commentator on the South, but until I read his new book I did not realize his achievement. He has been an intelligent and sensitive observer of Southern life as the region has lived through fundamental transformations. The subtitle of this book uses the word "meditations," and these essays are indeed thoughtful musings that give a philosophical reading of Southern culture by one who laments the gentle ways of the South that have vanished, says good riddance to the bad, and points us toward savoring those abiding experiences that still are available.

McGehee positions his book intentionally as a contribution to Southern Studies, and it is. He tackles issues like the Confederate flag debate, conservative and liberal positions in politics, and, bless him, ways in which Elvis and football are religions in the

South. He interprets Southern rituals, places, and icons from a self-consciously Southern perspective. His range is wide—senior proms to snake handling, barbershops to frontier hymnals, cookbooks to BB guns. His portraits of Southern icons would be a great source for journalists writing stories, students researching papers, or academics looking for information on such interesting but often undocumented cultural topics as waving (as in people in cars waving their hands in a friendly gesture to other motorists) and Vick's Salve (an unacknowledged but effective North Carolina contribution to the American health care system).

My favorite pieces are McGehee's writings on the environment and landscape. He provides the eloquent testament of a mature Southerner to the rhythms of the land and of life on the land he has long known. His memories of growing up and raising his children mix with his contemporary reflections on rural life, the countryside, and city life. McGehee, trained in religious studies and long a teacher and administrator at Wofford College in Spartanburg, South Carolina, has produced a book that reflects his lifetime of learning and experience.

CHARLES REAGAN WILSON

Best of the South: The Best of the Second Decade, 1996–2005.

Edited by Shannon Ravenel. Selected and introduced by Anne Tyler. Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2005. 368 pages. \$15.95 paper.

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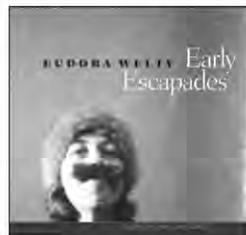
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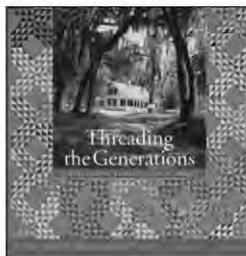
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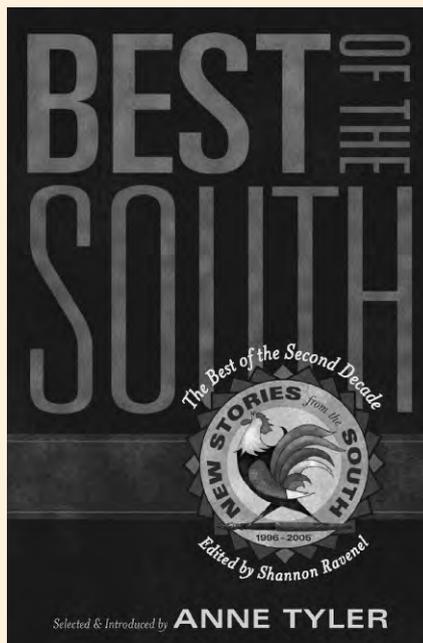
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For 20 years, the wise editors of Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill have bestowed upon the masses an annual New Stories from the South anthology. This year, Shannon Ravenel (who started the New Stories series in 1986) and guest editor Anne Tyler (who has published 16 novels, most recently *The Amateur Marriage*) have selected 20 of the 186 stories from the last decade for inclusion in the *Best of the South: The Best of the Second Decade*. This book reads the way a greatest-hits record from your all-time favorite band sounds. Included here are Lee Smith, William Gay, Jill McCorkle, Michael Knight (who is this year's Grisham Writer at the University of Mississippi), Scott Ely, Pam Durban, and many talented others. *People* magazine once said of the New Stories series that the "tales epitomize the qualities readers treasure in the best Southern literature: a rich appreciation of language and humor, as well as a dead-on sense of place and character." In other words, every offering is Southern short-story magic. Every one is a masterpiece. Every one is a slam dunk.

That said, perhaps the most well-written characters in these Southern tales are young people poignantly describing events from their early years that transformed them. In Heather Seller's "Fla. Boys" the 14-year-old protagonist—who learned to drive at 12 and who must fend for herself while her father is in the hospital—wrecks Dad's Oldsmobile on a Florida freeway and dreamily wanders into a service station where she meets a trucker who winds up sleeping with her. In the morning the girl, walking toward home in stolen blue jeans, leaves us with a whollop: "It scared me, all of it. As much as the thought of the next thing." Clyde Edgerton's funny, chubby eighth-grader, Debra, describes her first date



in "Debra's Flap and Snap." Debra meets L. Ray in shop class. "They didn't have special ed back then. They just called it shop." After the school dance, L. Ray masturbates in front of her, leaving her scarred for life. "The experience at the time left me feeling filthy. And he never asked me out again after that night, which I regretted only after I got married." Another 14-year-old, Roberta, from Judy Troy's "Ramone," wonders about the power of feeling "too much," and describes it like "loving a boy more than he loved you; you couldn't help it, and you couldn't stop it, and you made him love you in your dreams." It's only after making this connection that Roberta is able to understand her mother's fear of emotional overload and forgive her. Other standouts in this collection include Mark Richard's "Memorial Day," in which a small boy mistakes the personification of Death for the landlady's son; Max Steele's "The Unripe Heart," about the agony an eight-year-old experiences after he locks his mother out on the roof of the family's home; and Jim Grimsley's tale of a sermon-giving woman on an Atlanta commuter train, "Jesus Is Sending You This Message."

Best of the South authors are currently touring Southern bookshops with musicians from Sugar Hill Records' (of Durham, North Carolina) CD compilation *Best of the South*. It is rumored they are serving Maker's Mark after the readings and singings. Great fiction, great music, and Maker's—What more could you ask for? All I can think of is another volume of "Best of" in 2015.

SALLY CASSADY LYON

Joy in the Morning: Poems.

By Claude Wilkinson. Southern Messenger Poets Series. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004. 62 pages. \$26.95 cloth, \$16.95 paper.

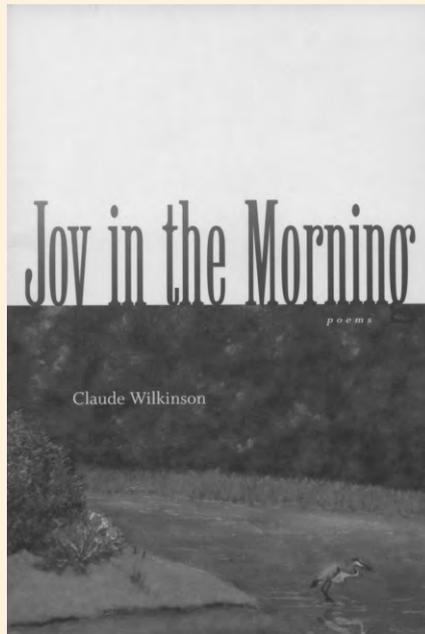
Claude Wilkinson returned to Oxford recently to read from *Joy in the Morning*, his latest poetry collection. A book of joys and sorrows, this slim volume yields kudzu and Renoir, free verse and sonnets, Greek heroes and Gospel tunes, subtle puns and an occasional mock epic attitude. The soft-spoken author told his Square Books audience that several poems had their start in 2000-2001, when he served as the University of Mississippi's John and Renée Grisham Visiting Southern Writer in Residence. That same year, the Whiting Foundation recognized Wilkinson's literary promise with a large cash prize and a collector's edition of Henry David Thoreau.

The Foundation saw a deep likeness between the poet from Nesbit, Mississippi, and the 19th-century author from Concord, Massachusetts. In *Walden: or, Life in the Woods*, his most famous text, Thoreau compares Walden Pond ("God's drop") to the holy Ganges River; for him, bathing in those waters at dawn is a sacred immersion. For Wilkinson, too, nature glimmers with transcen-

dence. The title *Joy in the Morning* comes from the psalm he cites as his epigraph; and Wilkinson reads God's message of joy in the flash of "radiant schools of fish," "a coneflower's purple alms," and "undulations of butterflies."

As lovers of music, Thoreau and Wilkinson are alert to sounds of harmony and dissonance: flute notes, loons, and locomotives at Walden; blues and jazz, redbirds, and 18-wheelers in the South. The authors' eyesight is as sharp as their hearing. The act of vision becomes so crucial that both *Walden* and *Joy in the Morning* achieve an air of prophecy, especially in Wilkinson's many references to dreams and revelations. The poem "Grail" recalls his early longing "to be changed / from child to a giver / of omens and dreams." During a cold Christmas season, a time of waiting, the boy walks under a "temple" of Mississippi trees—sycamore, locust, cedar—hoping to spot "one remarkable fire" in the dark sky. The poem's title evokes the religious quest of King Arthur's purest knights, and Wilkinson might have even more in common with the great metaphysical poets of 17th-century England than he does with Thoreau's optimistic transcendentalism. Like Donne and Herbert, Wilkinson speaks of spiritual struggle, the dark night that precedes the joyful morning. At his local book signing, he pointed out that joy can come even in the "mourning."

Thus, his poem "Mourning Song" describes a dove's call "from the brink." Beginning "like a tear, / as much glory as despair / on the broken note," the bird's mysterious song of grief and gladness "falls imperceptibly over / chambers of dream," just before the sleeper is "released" from the night. In another poem, "The Grace of Dreams," the narrator wonders if a



field of "tall bleached grass / and its single leafless scrub" in his recurring nightmare might conceal "the favor of the Lord," as the artist Rousseau hides kittenish lions and an earthy nude in jungles of "passionflower and fern." Rousseau's bold landscape is the lushest of several allusions to art in *Joy in the Morning*. Himself an artist, Wilkinson reproduces a lovely detail from his painting "Cypress Grove" on the cover of his book. A few years ago, he contributed several landscape sketches and commentary to *The Yalobusha Review*, the University of Mississippi's literary journal. In that article, Wilkinson observed: "While I typically paint scenes that offer an alluring serenity, there is always present, at least to my mind, the undercurrent that these spots may soon be lost to some form of encroachment."

Loss is a serious threat in his poetry as well. *Joy in the Morning* begins on a melancholy note with a poem named after Michael Crespo's "The Enduring Night," a painting of "moon, rabbit, dark." A more familiar title to most readers is "Cape Cod Evening, 1939," Wilkinson's homage to Edward Hopper, a modern artist known for

his edgy scenes: "the soliloquy / of anguish seems beyond / what anything could take." In other poems, Wilkinson describes the loss of a beloved dog, the hauling of family cows to slaughter, the "shocked bodies" of chickens killed for the evening meal, and a wolf's attack on a gardenia-white crane. "Golden Years" is the ironic title of a poem about a nursing home; an octogenarian "sits in the rec room / before candlelit cake / as if watching a house burn." Saddest of all, Wilkinson remembers his mother's final weeks in a Memphis hospital and his father's last days. The dying man lingers "between ether and earth" while asking his guilt-burdened son, "Things okay, / between you and me?"

Yet, the son is able to reassure his father and then to comfort himself. Wilkinson also fortifies his readers for hard times to come by reminding us of the consolations of memory, art, religious faith, language, and even humor. While *Joy in the Morning* begins with the terrors of "The Enduring Night," the book closes with claps of praise in "Doxology and Benediction." Halfway between these extremes of despair and hope, the poet playfully describes a haircut. In "The Barbershop," a "heroic chorus"—made up of farmers, a gardener, young "Romeos," and the poet too—arrives with their "jawbones of asses." Each is "summoned" to be "cropped, / shaven, anointed with pomade"; the ceremony over, each "tramples out / over the dingy fleece of our strength"—wry references to the biblical Samson and the legendary Jason. With good grace, Claude Wilkinson redeems frail human enterprises in his strong poems.

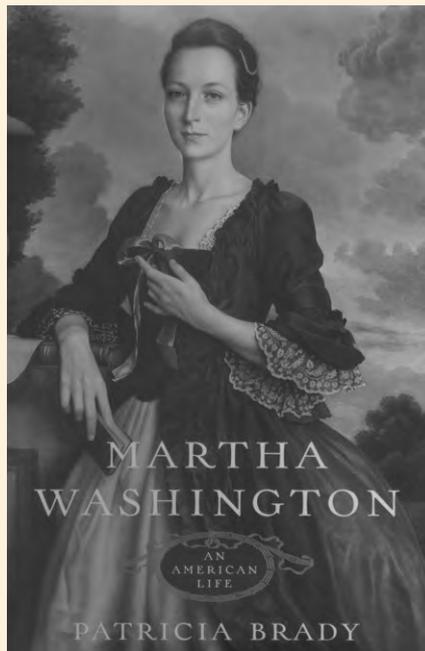
JOAN WYLIE HALL

Martha Washington: An American Life.

By Patricia Brady. New York: The Viking Press, 2005. 276 pages. \$24.95 cloth.

Eighteenth-century American women are at long last being rescued from oblivion. In recent years, biographers have begun tapping into—and helping to create—a growing public interest in the “founding fathers,” creating the phenomenon that *Newsweek* has dubbed “founders chic.” Now, increasingly, historians have begun to capture the less public experiences of the new nation’s “founding mothers.” We now know much more about the lives of Abigail Adams, Elizabeth Graeme Fergusson, Mercy Otis Warren, Deborah Franklin, Deborah Sampson Gannett, and Judith Sargent Murray than anyone would have thought possible a few decades ago. And yet one woman—Martha Washington—is strangely missing from the pantheon. America’s first “First Lady” (they called her Madam Presidentess at the time) remains a vague presence, as hidden from view as ever.

Patricia Brady’s *Martha Washington: An American Life* is an admirable effort to bring Washington out of the shadows, even as it might explain just why most biographers may have avoided her as a subject. As Brady points out in her introduction, Washington destroyed virtually all of her personal correspondence before she died. Thus it is difficult, if not impossible, to bring her alive, to capture her essence, or to develop many insights about her hopes and fears, much less her understanding of her place—as a woman or as a patriot—in the founding of the American nation.



Scholars who are interested in feminist theory, or who want insights on the gender and status constructs that informed the lives of men and women in the 18th century, will no doubt be disappointed in Brady’s book. Chronologically rather than analytically organized, this is a straightforward biography, written in a chatty, familiar, and accessible fashion. Perhaps understandably, George Washington’s career dominates. Martha is seen all too often as an appendage to her husband, as a loving helpmeet who acquiesces to her fate and makes life as comfortable as possible for the planter, general, and president. The rhythms of Martha’s life are wedded to her husband’s experiences. She evidently shares his political views without question. His trajectory becomes hers, as she follows him from camp to camp as long as the Revolution lasts, and then to New York when he assumes the presidency. Martha becomes more interesting, and more of her own person, on those rare occasions when she refuses to follow her

husband, or expresses her dissatisfaction with the turn his life has taken. When he left for Philadelphia and the Constitutional Convention, for instance, she remained firmly ensconced at Mount Vernon. Nor was she especially happy in New York, where her duties as the president’s wife virtually took over her own life.

Brady clearly likes both George and Martha Washington. This is not a “warts and all” biography. When she describes the Revolutionary army’s experience at Valley Forge, she appears not to notice the difference between the suffering of the common soldiers and the relatively comfortable existence of the officers and their wives. She talks of a few house slaves in passing—including a couple who ran away—but does not even mention the slaves whose labor in the fields made Mount Vernon a growing concern.

The book is marred by the occasional anachronism. References to the “burning intensity of [Martha’s] love for her husband” seem out of place in a world that had yet to embrace the notion of romantic love (105). The assertion that Mercy Otis Warren underestimated Martha’s intelligence “because of her soft southern manner” is doubtful (108). The stereotypical “Southern belle” was a product of the 19th, not the 18th, century.

Still, this is a lively, eminently readable book. It does something to humanize Martha Washington and, perhaps more importantly, to remind readers that women were present at the founding.

SHEILA L. SKEMP

Music of the South Conference September 2–3, 2005

The Center, in conjunction with University Outreach, hosted the inaugural Music of the South Conference, September 2–3, 2005. It began with presentations on gender and Southern music and included other panels that dealt with such topics as religion, race relations, generational differences in Southern music, Mississippi musicians, and music in different parts of the South. Stephen Shearon offered a wide-ranging multimedia look at the South through music.

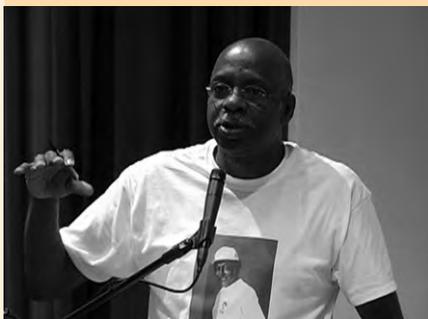
Bill Malone, author of *Country Music U.S.A.* and other books on music in the South, delivered the keynote address on Mike Seeger and issues of musical authenticity in the folk music revival. Malone and his wife, Bobbie, also performed traditional music.

Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast the week before the conference, and many participants reflected upon New Orleans's central role in Southern music. Mississippi's Jones Sisters closed out the conference with gospel singing, putting an appropriate benediction on this year's gathering.

CHARLES REAGAN WILSON



Bobbie Malone and keynote speaker Bill Malone



Sylvester Oliver, music professor at Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi

2006 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration to Explore Southern Food, Drink in History, Literature, Film

Taste buds in the Deep South favor biscuits, gumbo, sweet tea, bourbon balls, fried chicken, tomato aspic, pecan pie, mint juleps, and other foods and beverages so popular they have become icons, actually representing the region. Food and drink show up everywhere in Southern history, literature, and film. What do these foods and beverages tell about the South? What do their history and regional variations reveal?

Find out at the 17th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, to be held February 23-26, 2006, in Natchez, Mississippi. Using the theme "Biscuits, Gumbo, Sweet Tea, and Bourbon Balls: Southern Food and Drink in History, Literature, and Film," the conference will explore all manner of Southern foods and beverages.

John T. Edge, a widely published author and director of the Southern Foodways Alliance at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, advised organizers of the conference program. He will speak about the legacy of the South's fried chicken cooks of African descent and will introduce one of the films to be shown at the festival, *Smokestack Lightning: A Day in the Life of Barbecue*, by Lolis Eric Elie, of New Orleans.

Other authors who will speak about various aspects of Southern foodways are Jessica Harris, *Iron Pots and Wooden Spoons: Africa's Gifts to New World Cooking*; John Egerton, *Southern Food: At Home, on the Road, in History*; Robert St. John, *Deep South Staples or How to Survive in a Southern Kitchen without a Can of Cream of Mushroom Soup*; and Gayden Metcalfe and Charlotte Hays, *Being Dead Is No Excuse: The Official Southern Ladies Guide to Hosting the Perfect Funeral*.

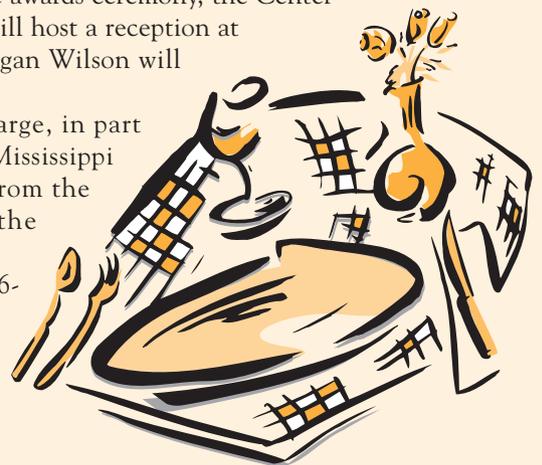
Martha Foose, executive chef of Viking Cooking School in Greenwood, Mississippi, will present "Cooking to the Blues," a cooking demonstration with music by Delta musician Duff Dorough. Judy Hood, from the University of Miami, will talk about food imagery in the works of Zora Neale Hurston, and literary scholar Kenneth Holditch will discuss food and beverage imagery in Tennessee Williams's plays. Amy Evans, oral historian for the Southern Foodways Alliance, will look at Mississippi's hot tamale tradition.

There will be a panel discussion on Southern drinks, including moonshine, mint juleps, Coca-Cola, beer, wine, and tea. The conference will also include book signings, tastings, special meals, writing workshops, food shows, receptions, and parties.

Receiving special writing awards are William Ferris, former director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture and now at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; literary scholar Noel Polk, Mississippi State University; and playwright Beth Henley. Prior to the awards ceremony, the Center for the Study of Southern Culture will host a reception at which Center director Charles Reagan Wilson will make remarks.

Most of the NLCC is free of charge, in part because of annual funding by the Mississippi Humanities Council and a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

For information, call toll-free 866-296-NLCC (6522) or 601-446-1289; e-mail Christy.Williams@colin.edu; or visit the Web site: www.colin.edu/nlcc.



Joe York

Joe York

New Cookbook Celebrates Oxford's Eclectic Cultural Mix

Literature, fine art, and delicious food combine to make Oxford one of the premier cultural epicenters of the South, and the Yoknapatawpha Arts Council has captured that unique Southern combination in a new cookbook, *Square Table: A Collection of Recipes from Oxford, Mississippi*, published at the end of October.

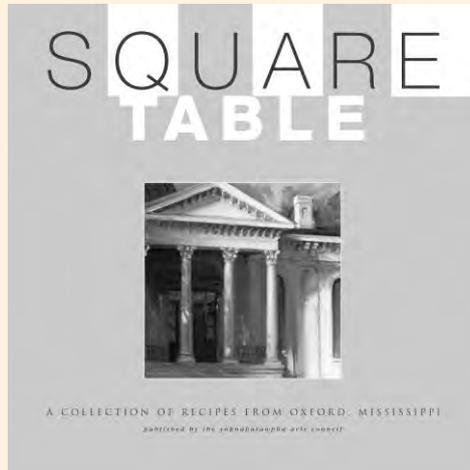
Almost 350 recipes for traditional Southern dishes, local favorites, plus the best from celebrated New South chefs share space in this beautiful book, along with the words and images of many of Oxford's authors and artists.

John T. Edge, cookbook author, director of the Southern Foodways Alliance at the University of Mississippi, and well-published food writer with works appearing in the *New York Times*, *Gourmet*, and *Saveur* magazines, has high praise for the work in his introduction to the cookbook:

"The art alone is worth the fare. But don't judge this book by a thumb-through, even if you're swooning by page thirty-seven. Find a space for *Square Table* on your kitchen shelf. Dog-ear the pages; edit the recipes to suit your palate. Make the book your own.

"A year may pass before you come to truly appreciate the effort. By then your repertoire will include smothered doves and marmalade sweet potatoes, not to mention cream cheese jalapeño venison rolls and cornbread salad."

The eclectic mix of literature, art, and food in *Square Table* reflects the unique feel and flavor of Oxford itself. Essays from writers with ties to Oxford, such as Curtis Wilkie, John Grisham, Lisa Howorth, and Julia Reed, are by turns funny and poignant, most notably in the case of the late author Larry Brown, whose essay was completed only days before he died. Selections from Oxford's most famous past resident, Nobel Prize-winning author



William Faulkner, as well as revered journalist and Mississippi author Willie Morris are also sprinkled throughout the book.

Square Table is a visual treat as well. Celebrated artists from the community supplied beautiful renderings of Oxford. The book includes work from more than a dozen artists, among them Jere Allen, whom *Art and Antique* magazine has called a "modern-day master" and whose work has received international acclaim; Jason Bouldin, a Harvard-educated artist and winner of the grand prize in the Portrait Society of America's 2002 International Portrait Competition, who contributed the art for the cover of the cookbook; and Marty Vinograd, a nationally recognized collage artist whose portraits and other work are featured in the University of Mississippi Museum, Washington, D.C.'s Decatur House, and the Israeli Heritage International Bank.

Square Table also features 17 colorful photographs by internationally recognized photographer Langdon Clay, whose work has been featured in numerous books and magazines, including *Southern Living*, capture favorite local activities such as tailgating in the Grove, a Halloween pumpkin patch, and the bounty of the local farmer's market. Historical photos of Oxford, many of which have never been published until now, highlight the town's

roots, while reminiscences about the town and its food culture from Oxford residents, such as William Lewis, Julie Walton, and Nan Davis, contribute to the essentially Southern sense of place that permeates the book.

The cookbook reflects a substantial community effort. A committee of 67 people guided the project, and 260 Oxford residents contributed hundreds of favorite recipes, which were then triple-tested by almost 100 volunteer cooks. The award-winning chefs of City Grocery, L & M's Kitchen and Salumeria, 208, and Yocona River Inn—among several other area restaurants—also contributed recipes for their patrons' favorite dishes.

With 11 recipe categories plus several complete menus provided, *Square Table* includes the best cuisine ideas from Oxford residents and restaurants, not to mention practical tips on preparing and serving food.

Proceeds from the book will help the city continue to celebrate and foster its unique artistic culture by funding the activities of the Yoknapatawpha Arts Council. YAC enriches the community by providing community arts grants, sponsoring the annual Oxford Film Festival and the Double Decker Festival, organizing local art sales and demonstrations, as well as operating writing contests, drama workshops, and art shows for children.

Square Table is available for \$32.00 a copy. To order, contact the Yoknapatawpha Arts Council at 662-236-6429 or e-mail yac@watervalley.net. One book can be shipped with two-day delivery for \$5.95 shipping and handling. Add \$2.00 for each additional book ordered. A half case of six books can be delivered to a single address for a shipping cost of \$9.00 and \$16.00 for a full case of 12 books. Mississippi residents should add 7 percent sales tax.

ELLEN MEACHAM

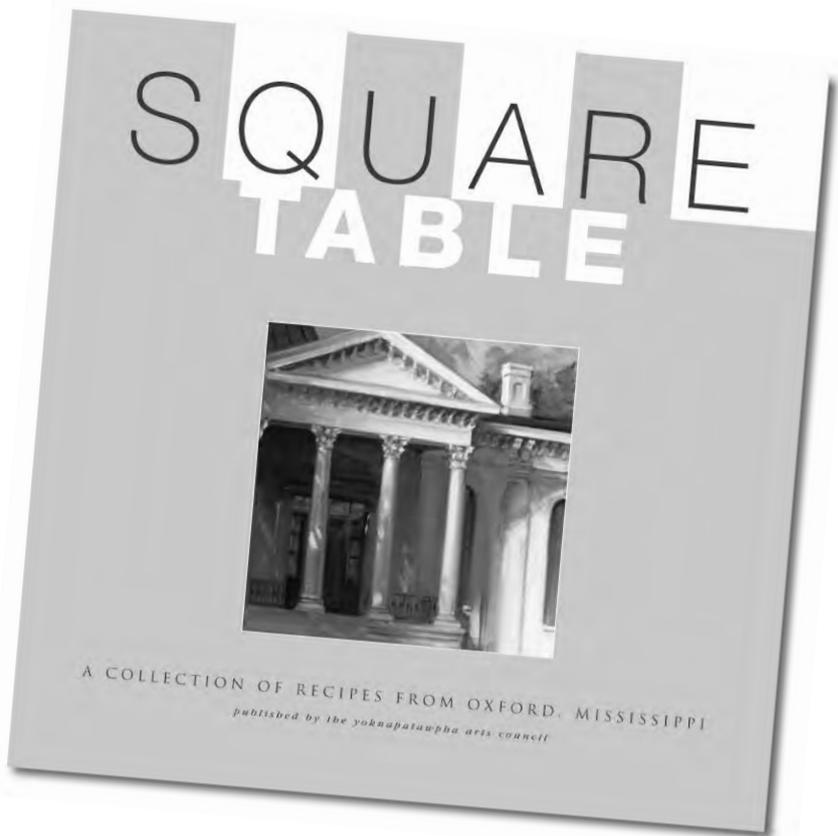
Oxford's finest new cookbook is here!

Cover art by Jason Bouldin

A collection of recipes, original artwork, and personal accounts of Southern cooking by Oxford's most distinguished literary figures, *Square Table* is the perfect gift—for yourself and everyone on your holiday list. A beautiful book—a perfect gift.

All proceeds benefit the
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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

MARION BARNWELL taught English at Delta State University for many years. She is editor of the anthology *A Place Called Mississippi* (1997) and coauthor of *Touring Literary Mississippi* (2002).

MARY BATTLE is a second-year graduate Southern Studies student at the University of Mississippi. She is serving as an intern for the soon-to-be-opened Cotton Exchange Museum in Memphis, Tennessee.

WILLIAM BEARDEN is the president of the William Bearden Company of Memphis, Tennessee, which produces documentary films, live events, and corporate videos. He is in charge of productions for the Cotton Museum at the Memphis Cotton Exchange and is also the author of *Cotton: From Southern Fields to Memphis Market*, a collection of photographs and descriptions of the cotton industry in the Delta region.

MARK CAMARIGG practiced law in California for several years before moving to Mississippi in 2002 to study Southern history, work for *Living Blues* magazine as a graduate assistant, visit jook joints, and soak up Southern culture. In the spring of 2004, he became publications manager of *Living Blues*.

MICHAEL DAVENPORT, a retired teacher who lives near Greeneville, Tennessee, taught Advanced Placement English and Great Books courses for 30 years. He was a Saks Fellow at the 2001 Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference and is currently writing fiction and working on some editing projects.

ADAM GUSSOW, assistant professor of English and Southern Studies at the University of Mississippi, is the author of *Mister Satan's Apprentice: A Blues Memoir and Seems Like Murder Here: Southern Violence and the Blues Tradition*, winner of the C. Hugh Holman Award for the best book of literary scholarship or criticism in Southern literature published in 2002.

JOAN WYLIE HALL teaches in the English Department at the University of Mississippi. She is the author of *Shirley Jackson: A Study of the Short Fiction* and articles on Tennessee Williams, William Faulkner, Grace King, Frances Newman, and others.

WILL HUSTWIT is a doctoral student in the History Department at the University of Mississippi. He is

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DONALD M. KARTIGANER holds the William Howry Chair in Faulkner Studies at the University of Mississippi and is director of the Faulkner Conference. He is the author of *The Fragile Thread: The Meaning of Form in Faulkner's Novels* and has completed a book-length study, "Repetition Forward: A Theory of Modernist Reading."

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JENNIFER SOUTHALL is advancement associate for annual giving at the University of Mississippi, where she received a BA in English in 1992. She taught high school English and worked as a copyeditor before returning to Ole Miss in 2003.

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CURTIS WILKIE, author of *Dixie: A Personal Odyssey through Events that Shaped the Modern South*, lives in New Orleans and Oxford, Mississippi, where he holds the Cook chair in journalism at the University of Mississippi.

CHARLES REAGAN WILSON is director of the Center and professor of history and Southern Studies. Among his publications are *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause* and *Judgment and Grace in Dixie: Southern Faiths from Faulkner to Elvis*.

(continued from page 8)

31, 2006. Authors whose papers are selected will receive a waiver of the conference registration fee, and lodging at the Inn at Ole Miss from Saturday, July 22, through Thursday, July 27. For short papers, three copies of two-

page abstracts must be submitted by January 31, 2006. Authors whose papers are selected will receive a reduction of the registration fee to \$100. In addition to commercial lodging, inexpensive dormitory rooms are available. All manuscripts and inquiries should be addressed to Donald Kartiganer, Department

of English, The University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677-1848. Telephone: 662-915-5793, e-mail: dkartiga@olemiss.edu. Panel abstracts may be sent by e-mail attachment; plenary manuscripts should only be sent by regular mail. Decisions for all papers will be made by March 1, 2006.

Gift Ideas

J. B. Murry: Writing in an Unknown Tongue; Reading through the Water

J. B. Murry, a self-educated African American visionary from Georgia, celebrates ritual "writing in the Spirit" and water divination.



These traditional expressions, derived from African influences, occur throughout the Caribbean, South America, and the American South. This DVD shows Murray performing the rituals and includes shots of some of the paintings for which he has gained national recognition. This short documentary raises issues about the relationship between the spiritual and the aesthetic in the art of religious visionaries. By Judith McWillie/University of Georgia. 1986.

Color, 15 minutes.
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James "Son" Thomas

A renowned Delta blues singer, "Son" Thomas was also a gifted clay sculptor. Filmed at his home in Leland, Mississippi,

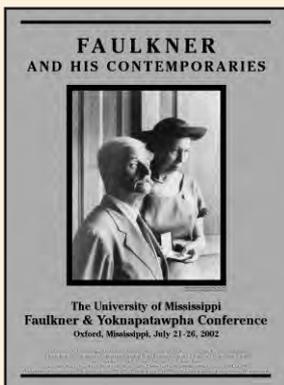


this treatment juxtaposes Thomas's artwork with several musical performances. It also includes a sequence showing how he worked clay to create his famous sculptures of the human skull. By Judith McWillie/University of Georgia. 1986.

Color, 17 minutes.
DVD1104 \$15.00
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William Faulkner and Eudora Welty

This film features Eudora Welty at the opening session of the 1987 Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference. Welty reads from her story "Why I Live at the P.O." and answers questions about her work and Faulkner's.



Color, 34 minutes.
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