

the Southern Register

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOUTHERN CULTURE • FALL 2011



THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

New Prizes Honor Ann Abadie and Sue Hart

Thanks to a gift from an anonymous donor, two new prizes honoring Ann Abadie and Sue Hart will soon be available to Southern Studies students. Abadie retired from her position as associate director in the summer of 2011 and now works for the Center as a consultant, and Hart retired from her position as publications editor and research librarian with the Center in 1995. Mary Lillian (Sue)

Hart, a Mississippi native who came to the University from Yale, was involved in many Center projects and is perhaps best known for first suggesting the idea of the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*. She and Abadie both served as associate editors of the *Encyclopedia*.

The Sue Hart Prize will honor the best work by a student in Southern Studies 101 and 102. According to Center Director

Ted Ownby, it is important to recognize exceptional work by the freshmen and sophomores who usually take 100-level classes. “This prize might help us raise standards in some classes, and it certainly will hold up examples of the best work of students in introductory classes. It could help us recruit some new majors by taking note of students with the potential to go on and do more good work.”

The Ann Abadie Prize will honor the best work in documentary media. In recent years, Southern Studies students have been doing more work than ever making films, constructing websites, exhibiting documentary photography, and doing other forms of documentary work. A new prize will honor documentary work that is both intellectually and technologically sophisticated.

The new prizes will join the other five prizes in Southern Studies—the Gray Award and Coterie Award for the best two undergraduate papers in Southern Studies, the Peter Aschoff Award for the best paper on southern music, and the Lucille and Motée Daniels Awards for the best paper and best thesis by Southern Studies graduate students.

Sue Hart at her retirement party at Barnard Observatory in 1995



William Ferris

We would love to keep in closer touch with our friends. Two easy ways include:

1. Facebook users, please “Like” the Center for the Study of Southern Culture. Being a Facebook Friend of the Center brings you news large and small, announcements, job ads, and occasional gossip.



2. Send us your e-mail addresses. The easiest way for us to contact you, and one of the easiest ways for you to contribute as a Friend of the Center, is through an annual e-mail message. Please send your e-mail address to cssc@olemiss.edu.

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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

When I talk about the Center, I tend to emphasize how it brings together creative people. For years as undergraduate advisor and then graduate advisor, I noticed that the combination of interdisciplinary study, an open-minded approach to the possible subjects of that study, the uniqueness of the degree, and likely some other factors brought together people who were unconventional in many ways, and I hope the program has allowed multiple unconventionalities to be productive in taking their own directions.

I am delighted this year to welcome to the Center so many new people, many of whom bring their own unconventional sides to Oxford. The first week of classes came with 14 new MA students. In September a meeting of faculty and staff brought together 27 people, with four new assistant professors joining the faculty and six staff members from Media and Documentary Projects joining us for the first time as full partners in Southern Studies. Two new staff members, Becca Walton and LaTonya Pittman, joined the Center at the start of the new semester, and both immediately became essential. As the new administrative assistant, Pittman is responsible for registering students and scheduling classes, among other things. With a management and information systems degree from the University of Mississippi, she immediately becomes the most technologically sophisticated person in Barnard Observatory.

Becca Walton and Jimmy Thomas have new positions as associate directors. To deal with the retirement of Associate Director Ann Abadie, the Center created two new positions, associate director for publications (Thomas) and associate director for projects (Walton). Both have Southern Studies MA degrees. Jimmy Thomas has worked for eight years as the Center's publications editor, including managing editor of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, and Walton has worked for several nonprofits, most recently the American College of the Building Arts in Charleston. Thomas's new jobs include editing the *Southern Register* and other publishing projects, and Walton's new jobs include conferences and other events, grant writing, and spreading news of the Center's work through Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. Both will be working along with LaTonya Pittman to rethink and update the Center's website.

The first week of October included one of those exciting, exhausting stretches where the people of Southern Studies had things going on every day. On Monday Zandria Robinson gave a talk at the Sarah Isom Center on musician Nicki Minaj, and that night Joe York and Andy Harper were at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., for a showing of the film *Mississippi Innocence*. On Tuesday and Wednesday, guest George Thompson talked to numerous authors and students as part of a two-day publisher-in-residence program. On Thursday, many of us headed to New Orleans for a fundraising event at the Marigny home of Jane and Terry Smith, complete with music from students Jake Fussell, Jamison Hollister, and McGhee Monteith. The New Orleans event was a success because it brought together about 25 years of Southern Studies students and alumni, along with faculty and staff and lots of friends from the area. On Friday and Saturday, four faculty and three graduate students stayed in New Orleans to present papers at the Popular Culture in the South/American Culture Association in the South Conference on topics ranging from McCarthyism, international understandings of Southern music, and sexuality and the law to contemporary Southern neighborhoods, photography, and feminism. Back in Oxford on Saturday, Adam Gussow met dozens of potential new students and their families at the university's fall visit day and an interview with Charles Reagan Wilson aired on *Mississippi Arts Hour*. On Sunday some people rested, and on Monday Katie McKee interviewed author Charles Frazier at Off Square Books.

We are looking forward to our March 2–3 event, Music of the South: A Southern Studies Homecoming. It will offer a chance for all former and current Southern Studies students, faculty, and staff who play, write about, organize, film, record, produce, and are otherwise involved in music to come to Oxford to discuss what they do. There will be at least one chance, and likely two, for musicians to perform and plenty of chance

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es to talk. The intersections of making music and studying its cultural contexts and meanings tend to produce intriguing discussions inside and outside class, and we look forward to a still-in-development combination of concert and conference. It will be important to emphasize that the Center encourages the study and performance of all music, not just music that is commercially popular, distinctively or identifiably Southern, or by common definitions “good.”

This issue of the *Southern Register* mentions several forms of fundraising—the event in New Orleans, a new assistantship, new paper prizes, a new endowment. In fundraising, it is the people in Southern Studies—the faculty, staff, and especially the students and alumni—whom we usually emphasize. There are, to be sure, times when those of us who try to raise funds wonder how to do so in a period of extraordinary problems and possibilities, when controversies about economic and racial injustice, access to health care, the definition of life, use of the death penalty, and immigration policies have the potential to render insignificant our efforts to improve education and make it more available. But one positive way to keep going is to emphasize the creativity of students and others in the program, some of whom will be thinking through those problems, maybe redefining them, and perhaps solving some of them. As I say whenever I think people are listening, studying and teaching have benefits we may not be able to imagine.

Ted Ownby

SEEKING APPLICATIONS

The History Department and the Center for the Study of Southern Culture of the University of Mississippi seek either a tenured associate professor or a tenure-track assistant professor in the History of the United States South to begin in August 2012. Applicants from all specializations will be considered if they can contribute to the interdisciplinary mission of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, which has BA and MA programs in Southern Studies. Candidates must complete an online application at jobs.olemiss.edu.

Living Blues News

The current issue of *Living Blues* highlights the blues of Lafayette, Louisiana. This city (and the surrounding areas) of 120,000 boasts an amazingly vibrant music scene. Steeped in both blues and zydeco, the music that spills forth from this region is unique in character and style. Zydeco dance halls attract dancers by the hundreds week after week, and houses big and small open up for jam sessions that go late into the night. The blues scene is grounded by guitarist Lil' Buck Sinegal. A lifelong sideman, Sinegal can play with most anybody in any style. He is Buckwheat Zydeco's long-time guitarist and part of the house band at the annual Ponderosa Stomp. He is also one of the main players in the local house-party scene, even providing one of the houses.

Many blues fans know the sounds of this region via the recordings made for Excello Records. Just 25 miles down the road from Lafayette in Crowley, entrepreneur J. D. Miller opened a small studio in 1946 and began recording local acts. Soon some of the most exciting and danceable sounds in the history of the blues came out of this tiny hole in the wall. A number of the artists who recorded there over the next 20 years still make music and are part of the gumbo of sounds in the area.

About a year ago, writer Scott M. Bock and photographer Gene Tomko were invited to a house party in Lafayette thrown by APO Records label owner Chad Kassem. They came back raving about the vibrant musical scene in Lafayette and asked about doing an issue on the area. This issue is the result of their work.

Additionally, we welcome three new faces to the pages of *LB*. Blues scholars Robert H. Cataliotti and Stephen A. King are new contributing writers, and Southern Studies graduate student Katie Lambert starts as our new editorial assistant.

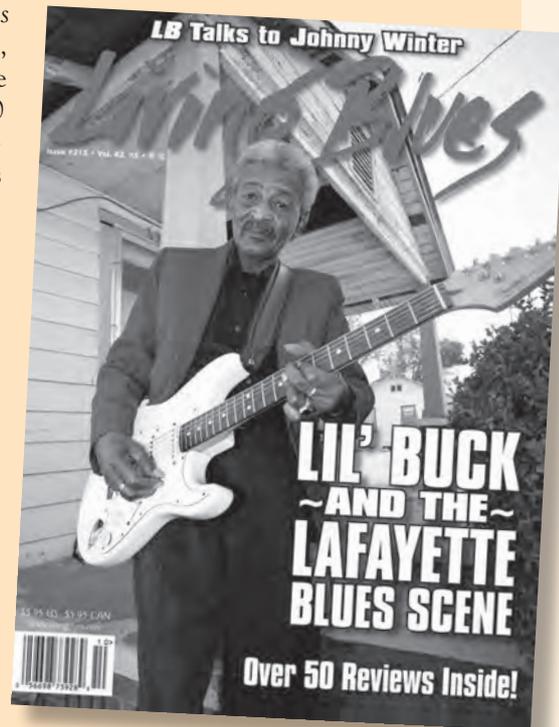
Finally, as many of you may have heard by now, *LB* founding editor Jim O'Neal was diagnosed with lymphoma. He is undergoing chemotherapy, but like millions of self-employed Americans, has no health insurance. There are currently three benefit concerts set up to help raise money for his medical bills. Donations to help defray some of Jim's medical expenses may be sent to:

Jim O'Neal Blues Fund
P.O. Box 10334
Kansas City, MO 64171

Our best wishes go out to Jim and his family.

A one-year subscription to *Living Blues* is \$25.95 and blues fans can subscribe online at www.livingblues.com. A complimentary issue of *Living Blues* is also available to readers of the *Southern Register* upon request. Simply e-mail info@livingblues and request a sample issue of the magazine.

Brett Bonner and Mark Camarigg



The Southern Foodways Alliance Documents the Cultivated South

Leann Hines of Levee Run Farm in Greenwood, Mississippi, has been raising pastured poultry since 2008. Her chickens, turkeys, ducks, and quail now thrive on land that her grandfather once dedicated to cotton and cattle. Stanley Hughes of Pine Knot Farms in Hurdle Mills, North Carolina, has transitioned his family's century-old tobacco farm to certified organic tobacco, and he now raises a variety of vegetables, as well. Their stories are part of two new oral history projects that were produced to complement the Southern Foodways Alliance's 2011 symposium theme—the Cultivated South. We focused on two farmers' markets: the Carrboro Farmers' Market in Carrboro, North Carolina, and the Downtown Greenwood Farmers' Market in Greenwood, Mississippi. Through interviews with market vendors and customers, we document the South's agricultural history, talk about current farming trends with farmers old and new, and learn how communities coalesce through food.

Founded in 1979, in partnership with the University of North Carolina's school of public health, the Carrboro Farmers' Market is one of the oldest farmers' markets in the state. It is set next to the Carrboro Town Hall, barely a mile from the bustling center of the UNC-Chapel Hill campus. Having outgrown its original location in the 1990s, today the market spans a converted baseball field, where as many as 65 vendors set up shop on Saturdays year-round, as well as every Wednesday during peak season. All Carrboro Farmers' Market goods are made or grown within a 50-mile radius, and the market takes great pride in its stipulation that the farmers and artisans themselves vend the goods that they produce.

The Downtown Greenwood Farmers' Market was established in 2008 as a project of Main Street Greenwood, a nonprofit organization whose mission is



Kate Medley

(above) Stanley Hughes of Pine Knot Farm in Hurdle Mills, North Carolina



Amy Evans Streeter

(left) Leann Hines of Levee Run Farm in Greenwood, Mississippi

to promote economic development and revitalization in this Delta town, once known as the Cotton Capital of the World. Located along the old Columbus and Greenville Railway, the market connects two parts of Greenwood that have long been racially divided. Every Saturday from May through September,

up to 15 vendors from Greenwood and surrounding counties set up tents, offering everything from blueberries to barbecue. The Market supports growers and makes fresh foods available to people who might not otherwise have access to them, and it has become a gathering place for all members of the community—rich and poor, young and old, black and white.

While these two farmers' markets are vastly different in a variety of ways, they tell a lot of the same stories. Louise Parrish, who sells cakes at the Carrboro Farmers' Market, may say it best: "You can't live in this world not wanting to work together or let everybody have their own share."

Visit www.southernfoodways.org for more.

Amy Evans Streeter

Yale Historian to Lecture on Civil War in Civil Rights Era

Yale historian David Blight will visit the University of Mississippi campus on November 16 to share his insights as part of the Gilder-Jordan Lecture in Southern History. Blight will speak about his latest book, *American Oracle: The Civil War in the Civil Rights Era*, in a free public lecture at 7:30 p.m. in Nutt Auditorium.

Blight's lecture will focus on the hold that the Civil War still has on the American historical imagination. "I'll do this in part by focusing on some or all of the writers I delve into in depth in this new book: Robert Penn Warren, Bruce Catton, Edmund Wilson, and James Baldwin," Blight said. "Each of these important writers, who worked in very different forms and all came from very different backgrounds, were major voices of how Americans remembered the Civil War during the era of the civil rights movement. Above all, I will discuss the connections and conflicts between the Civil War centennial commemoration of the 1950s and 1960s and the civil rights movement, which, as everyone knows, was so deeply and famously pivotal in Mississippi."

Blight is a Class of 1954 Professor of American History at Yale University who joined the faculty in January 2003. He previously taught at Amherst College for 13 years. In 2010–11 he was the Rogers Distinguished Fellow in



Historian David Blight

Nineteenth Century American History at the Huntington Library in San Marino, Calif. As the director of Yale's Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition, Blight has written and edited works about Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. Du Bois, and the underground railroad. In 2013 Simon and Shuster is scheduled to publish his biography, *Frederick Douglass: A Life*. Blight is one of the leading historians writing on the subjects of emancipation, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and how people remembered and interpreted all three.

Race and Reunion, Blight's 2002 book on Civil War memory, is a crucial work, said Ted Ownby, director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture. "It traces three ways different groups of Americans remembered the Civil War—some thought primarily about emancipation, some about North-South reconciliation, some about white supremacy. It's part social history, studying parades and organizations and the like, part intellectual history, studying the thought of historians and social theorists, and part political history, studying how memory mattered as parts of the political disputes of the late 1800s and early 1900s." The book was the winner of the Bancroft Prize and Merle Curti Prize, among several others. Additionally, Blight has been especially active in writing about and editing the work of abolition leader Frederick Douglass.

"His latest book, *American Oracle*," said Ownby, "addresses two topics the University of Mississippi is making particularly strong efforts to study in 2011 and 2012: the Civil War and the civil rights movement. We're delighted he can discuss that book as part of the Gilder-Jordan Lecture."

The Gilder-Jordan lecture series, organized through the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, the African American Studies Program, the Center for Civil War Research, and the Department of History, honors the support of Richard Gilder, Lois Chiles, and Dan and Lou Jordan. Richard Gilder, one of America's leading philanthropists, has supported the study of American history through the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History in New York, Yale University's Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition, and other organizations. Dan and Lou Jordan are University of Mississippi alumni living in Charlottesville, Virginia, where Dan Jordan is the former president of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation.

Rebecca Lauck Cleary

In Memoriam

David "Honeyboy" Edwards

Blues musician and author of *The World Don't Owe Me Nothing*
August 29, 1915–June 28, 2011

Betty Zachry Harrington

Longtime Faulkner Conference participant
and Friend of the Center
June 20, 1928–October 22, 2011

Jack Milton McLarty

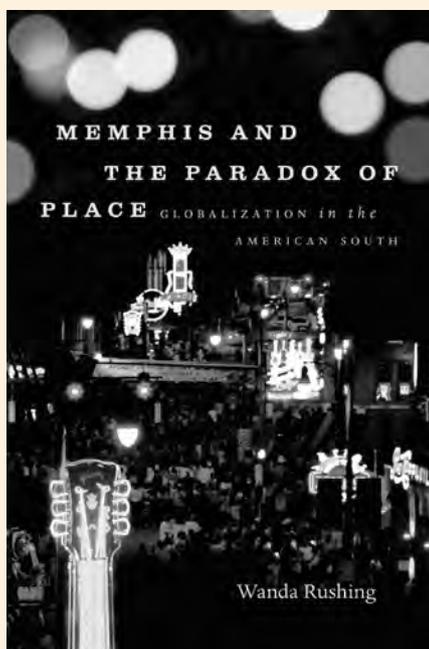
Former Center Advisory Committee chair
August 20, 1924–October 25, 2011



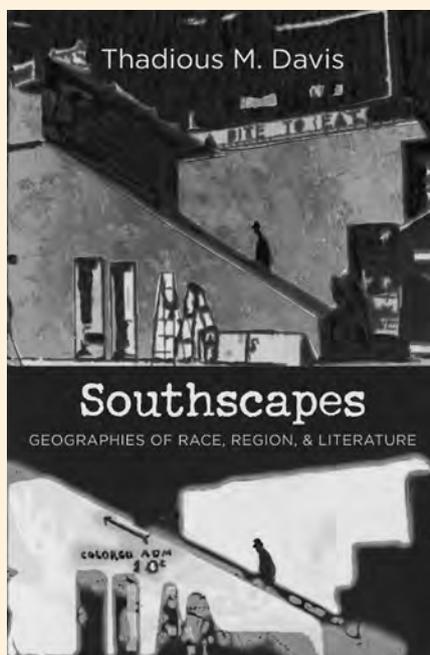
Southscapes Published in New Directions Series

The University of North Carolina Press has published Thadious M. Davis's *Southscapes: Geographies of Race, Region, and Literature*, the latest volume in the Center's New Directions in Southern Studies book series. Davis, the Geraldine R. Segal Professor of American Social Thought and Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania, draws from her extensive grounding in spatial theory to explore how African American writers in the Deep South have used the landscape in creating their imaginative portrayals of black life. The book refutes a narrow imagining of life under Jim Crow segregation, uncovering the agency of the marginalized, not just as political activists but as artists refashioning segregated spaces into sites of creativity. *Southscapes* places African Americans at the center of critical analyses of the U.S. South and explains the shift in the South from modernism to postmodernism.

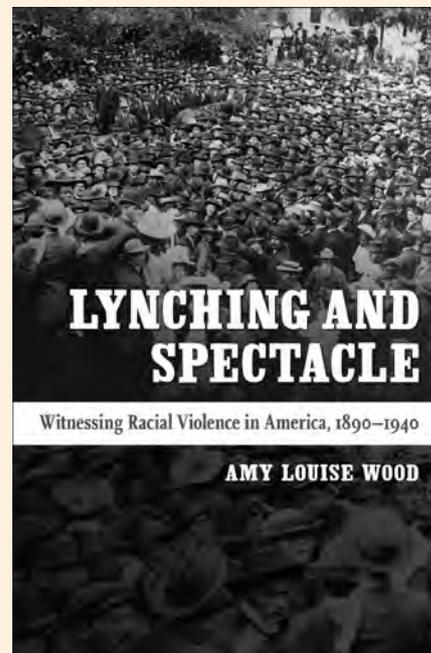
Over the past decade, the New Directions series has advanced works



by scholars constructing vibrant visions of the South through interdisciplinary research and the reworking of myopic historical narratives. Charles Reagan Wilson, Kelly Gene Cook Sr. Chair of History and Professor of Southern Studies, edits the series. The editorial board for the series includes Center Director Ted Ownby and former Southern Studies faculty mem-



bers Robert Brinkmeyer, author of *The Fourth Ghost: White Southern Writers and European Fascism, 1930–1950* and professor at the University of South Carolina, and Tom Rankin, director of the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. Other board members include Grace Elizabeth Hale, the University of Virginia; Anne Goodwyn Jones, Allegheny College; Charles Marsh, the University of Virginia; Jon Michael Spencer, the University of South Carolina; Allen Tullos, author of *Alabama Getaway: The Political Imaginary and the Heart of Dixie* and pro-



fessor at Emory University; and Patricia Yaeger, the University of Michigan.

The New Directions series began in 2007 with publication of Katherine Henninger's *Ordering the Facade: Photography and Contemporary Southern Women's Writing*. Other books in the series include Jessica Adams, *Wounds of Returning: Race, Memory, and Property on the Postbellum Plantation*; Wanda Rushing, *Memphis and the Paradox of Place: Globalization in the American South*; and Amy Louise Wood, *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America, 1890–1940*, the latter of which was co-winner of the Southern Regional Council's Lillian Smith Award. Together these volumes tackle issues of race, globalization, gender, popular culture, and the visual culture of the South, revitalizing academic discourse on the South and providing models of the New Southern Studies.

Kathryn Radishofski

Southern Studies Grad Returns with First Photography Exhibition

Southern Studies alumna Kate Medley's first photography exhibition, *Roadside Fare*, will debut at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture's Gammill Gallery in mid-October and run through mid-January. Medley captured most of the rural, food-focused images while "en route to someplace else"—usually on her way to visit small purveyors of Whole Foods, where she is employed to document the work of farmers and bring these stories into the market.

These color photos, however, are more than a way of breaking up the monotony of the drive. "I grew up in Mississippi," Medley explains, "and people often assume that means I have rural roots, but that isn't the case. These photographs—and these roadside stops—are a way for me to explore a culture I live amidst but am not directly involved in." But more than curiosity diverts her: "I feel Southerners have a certain responsibility to tell our own stories."

That sentiment—that Southerners should tell Southerners' stories—compelled Medley to travel to Philadelphia, Mississippi, among throngs of tenured journalists, to photograph the murder trial of Edgar Ray Killen in 2005, the summer before entering grad school. After picking up the phone to plead her case to Killen, the camera-shy ex-Klansman invited Medley and her camera into his home. "In a lot of ways Mr. Killen seemed kind-hearted and generous. He wanted to send me home with vegetables from his garden," she remembers. "The story quickly became much more complex than good guy versus bad guy." Those shots of Killen won Medley her first bid from the *New York Times*.

Medley continued to photograph and record oral histories with former Klansmen and White Citizens' Council members for her thesis project: "Fear, Faith, and Fatherland: The Complexities of Prejudice in the Civil Rights Movement." Exposure to the work of the Southern Foodways Alliance, however, opened her eyes to other ways of studying the complexity of a time and place: "Thinking of food as a lens to the culture of the South was new to me." As graduation neared, Medley landed the Whole Foods job, which she calls "a meeting of my craft and my interest."

In Medley's words, the *Roadside Fare* photographs portray an "unromanticized South, a working man's South, a changing South." One image shows a handwritten sign tacked to a cantaloupe-filled grocery cart—a scene reminiscent of an outdoor farm stand, but here the fruit is parked alongside pack-



(above) *Roadside Produce*, Aiken County, South Carolina, 2009



(left) *Packing House*, Pamlico County, North Carolina, 2011

aged snack food in a convenience store. Another image shows a woman's seed supply. Her use of tin cans and rusty lids hints that the endeavor is one pursued out of necessity

rather than political performance. Other photographs are more somber. There's the image of the silver queen corn sign propped behind the dirty glass door of a fractured concrete block building. Here a scene of decay surrounds an emblem of the most prolific season. In part, the *Roadside Fare* images are provocative because opposing elements cohabit the same frame: there's interplay between nostalgia and revulsion, want and plenty, calloused and callow, organic and manufactured, curve and angle.

Most of the photographs in the collection come from North Carolina, where Medley now lives. Images from Virginia, Louisiana, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee are also included.

Raised in Jackson, Mississippi, Medley graduated from the University of Montana–Missoula with a photojournalism degree in 2004. She attended the Poynter Institute and worked for newspapers in the South before entering the Southern Studies graduate program at the University of Mississippi. Find more of Medley's recent work online at wholefoods.com and southernfoodways.org

Georgeanna Chapman

Jesse Poesch, Tulane Professor, Leaves Lasting Legacy

American culture studies—Southern material culture studies in particular—lost a shining star on April 23, 2011. Jessie Poesch, a professor of art history at Tulane University from 1963 until her retirement in 1992, died at Touro Infirmary from complications of surgery. She was 88.

Poesch was a pioneering scholar in the history of the fine and decorative arts of the South. In 1983 she published her masterpiece, *The Art of the Old South: Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, and the Products of Craftsmen 1560–1860*, which was a landmark documentation and survey of a subject that until 1983 had been mostly limited to specific studies of artists and artifacts or to the arts of colonial Williamsburg. As a *New York Times* review pointed out, “There can be no doubt that the South has suffered until recently from the North’s domination of art scholarship, the art market, curatorial appointments, and publishing. This is now remedied dramatically by the appearance of this volume.”

Another outstanding achievement was the catalogue for the exhibition *Newcomb Pottery: An Enterprise for Southern Women, 1895–1940* (1984). In 2003 an expanded edition was published with her friend and colleague, Sally Main, senior curator of the Newcomb Art Gallery, entitled *Newcomb Pottery and Crafts: An Educational Enterprise for Women, 1895–1940*. At the time of her death she had just completed a new book on the Great Dismal Swamp.

Poesch was a native of Postville, Iowa, and graduated in 1944 from Antioch College where she majored in psychology. Ever intrepid, she worked with the American Friends Service reuniting European families after World War II and then briefly worked for the State Department. Her interest in art led her from a master’s degree from the University of Delaware’s Winterthur



Jesse Poesch—art historian, professor, mentor, and pioneer

Program in American Material Culture to master’s and doctoral degrees in art history from the University of Pennsylvania. Her acclaim among scholars grew over the years. She received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and was named a Fellow of the Society of Architectural Historians. Upon her retirement, Tulane established an endowed art professorship in her honor, and she was named Humanist of the Year by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.

In 1989, she came to the Center for the Study of Southern Culture as a visiting Ford Foundation Lecturer, delivering a myth-busting lecture, “Southern Art, Southern Identity,” in which she showed that images of the region in painting and architecture created before 1870 did not support later popular romantic *Gone with the Wind* notions about life in the Old South.

Poesch was buried in Postville. The Jessie J. Poesch Memorial Fund is being established to support the projects of the Newcomb Art Department and Newcomb Art Gallery at Tulane.

Lisa Howorth

Mark Your Calendars!

November 16, 2011
Gilder-Jordan Lecture in Southern History with David Blight

January 12–15, 2012
Taste of the South at Blackberry Farm
www.southernfoodways.org

January 29–30, 2012
Stir the Pot at Poole’s Diner featuring Chris Hastings, Raleigh, North Carolina
www.southernfoodways.org

March 2–3, 2012
Music of the South: A Southern Studies Homecoming

March 8–10, 2012
Porter L. Fortune, Jr. History Symposium

March 18–22, 2012
Mississippi Delta Literary Tour
www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com

March 22–24, 2012
19th Oxford Conference for the Book
www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com

April 15–16, 2012
Stir the Pot, Nashville
Hosted by Tandy Wilson and Tyler Brown and featuring Ashley Christensen, Nashville, Tennessee
www.southernfoodways.org

May 20–21, 2012
Stir the Pot, at Poole’s Diner featuring Steven Satterfield of Miller Union, Raleigh, North Carolina
www.southernfoodways.org

July 7–11, 2012
Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference
www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner

July 29–30, 2012
Stir the Pot, at Poole’s Diner featuring Pat Martin of Martin’s Bar-B-Que Joint, Raleigh, North Carolina
www.southernfoodways.org

Mississippi Innocence Goes to Washington

Kennedy Brewer, a man who was wrongfully convicted and spent 15 years of his life in prison for a crime he didn't commit, was able to watch the documentary film about his experience in front of 400 people in Washington, D.C., in October. Brewer received a standing ovation from the crowd after the viewing of the hour-long film.

Filmmaker Joe York said the audience's reaction to Brewer, after watching his story on the big screen, was compelling. "After people had seen the film, it was powerful to watch the crowd give him a standing ovation. It is also powerful to see people react to these stories and, hopefully, be able to create change systemically to keep them from happening again," said York, a producer/director with UM's Media and Documentary Projects.

The evening, which was hosted by the Freedom Forum at the Newseum's Annenberg Theater in Washington, D.C., came about thanks to the efforts of UM's Media and Documentary Projects and the Mississippi Innocence Project. *Mississippi Innocence* examines the wrongful murder convictions of two innocent men and their subsequent exonerations. Kennedy Brewer and Levon Brooks, who together served more than 30 years in prison in rural Noxubee County, Mississippi, were released in 2008, thanks to efforts of the Mississippi Innocence Project.

Before the screening, a panel discussion examined the state of innocence cases and the use of DNA evidence. Dahlia Lithwick of *Slate* magazine moderated a roundtable discussion that included Judge Harry Edwards, American University's Washington College of Law Professor Angela Davis, film producers Joe York and Tucker Carrington, and author John Grisham.

So far this year, *Mississippi Innocence* has won the audience award at the Oxford Film Festival and the transformative award at the Crossroads Film Festival. In October, it was also screened at the Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival.

For York, the most important part was that a serious discussion was start-



Bruce Guthrie

Discussing the documentary film *Mississippi Innocence* and the ongoing project are Judge Harry Edwards, U.S. Court of Appeals (retired); Professor Angela J. Davis, Washington College of Law; author John Grisham; and UM assistant professor of law/film producer Tucker Carrington.

ed about the issue. "It was one of those things that reminds you of the connections that exist at Ole Miss," York said. "There was Chancellor Dan Jones, Curtis Wilkie, John Grisham, Charles Overby, and all these Ole Miss folks in a room in the shadow of the Capitol, sharing the story of injustice that happened a few hours down the road from the university. Hopefully, after seeing the film, individuals who hold sway can bring about change and maybe make sure this doesn't happen again." The film was put together on a shoestring budget over two years, York said. "It's gratifying to see a project with little money come together on screen and have an impact in a venue outside our state. You wonder if it will resonate, but it absolutely did," he said.

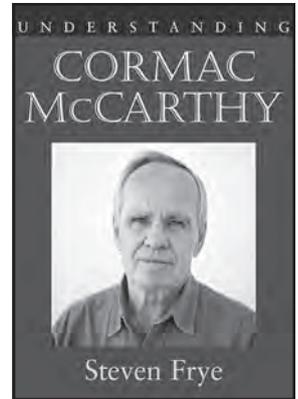
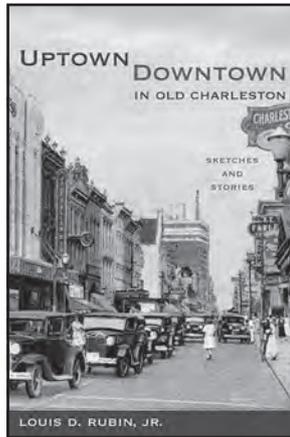
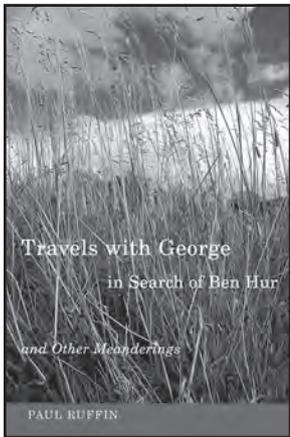
Tucker Carrington, director of the Innocence Project and UM assistant professor of law, said he was thrilled about the screening in Washington. "To have a national audience with legislators and policy people at a beautiful



venue was great, and to have the Ole Miss connection with Charles Overby was nice," he said.

Additionally, Media and Documentary Projects has received a \$10,000 Fledgling Fund Grant to create a curriculum to go along with the film for high school and law schools. "It's interesting to see how different teachers have reacted and used different teaching tools," York said. "It's a neat way to use film to create awareness but also use the strength of the narrative to get kids interested in science, narrative, and history. The film is good at starting conversations."

Rebecca Lauck Cleary



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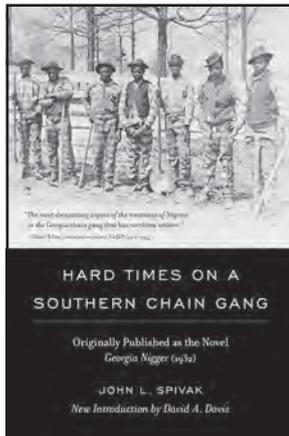
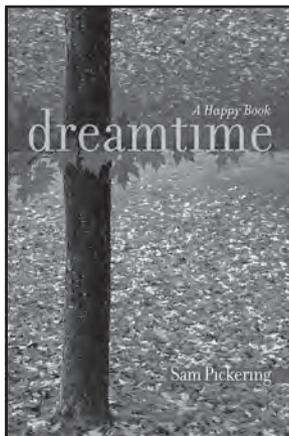
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New Endowment Effort for the Oxford Conference for the Book

A new endowment will help support the Oxford Conference for the Book. Past and present members of the Center's advisory committee started the fund in the summer of 2011 to honor Associate Director Ann Abadie on her retirement, and with encouragement from the Center's partners at Square Books, many past participants in the conference made contributions as well. The Center now hopes people who have attended the conference over the years will consider contributing to the endowment fund.

Ann Abadie, according to Center Director Ted Ownby, "has been the primary organizer of the book conference since it began, so it just makes sense to honor her work by supporting the conference." According to Ownby, the endowment will pay a percentage of the annual expenses of the conference, beginning perhaps in 2013. "This endowment is a terrific way to make the future of the Conference for the Book more secure. It will make it easier for the Center and its friends to plan each event without having to work quite so hard on—or worry quite so much about—annual fundraising. And naming the endowment for Ann will allow us a moment every year to recognize and celebrate the work she has done and continues to do at the Center."

The Conference over the years has been the site for intriguing gatherings for writers, publishers, editors, agents, reviewers, teachers, students, readers, and other people in the book world. It brings together well-known authors and rising stars in the publishing world with others interested in literature and literacy.

In recent years, most of the funding for the free-to-the-public conference comes from a combination of contributions from the R&B Feder Foundation for the Beaux Arts and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Mississippi Arts Commission, the Mississippi Humanities Council, the John and Renée Grisham Visiting Writers Fund, the Oxford Tourism Council, and many other groups on and off campus.

Contributions to the endowment are very much welcome. Anyone interested in making contributions can mail them to the Center or to the University of Mississippi Foundation, P.O. Box 249, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677-1848. Checks should specify that they are supporting the OCB Endowment or the Ann Abadie Endowment # 05149.

Celebration in the Marigny

On October 6, Center friends, alumni, students, faculty, and staff gathered in New Orleans for a fundraiser benefiting undergraduate scholarships and graduate assistantships. Attendees enjoyed a musical performance by Southern Studies students Jake Fussell, McGhee Monteith, and Jamison Hollister; hors d'oeuvres by Chef Tenney Flynn of GW Fins; spirits by Cathead Vodka, Vino Wholesale, and Lazy Magnolia Brewing Company; and a silent auction of art, books, photographs, and films.

Many thanks to Terry and Jane Spell Smith for opening their beautiful home (a six-bay double-frame shotgun, for the architecturally inclined) in the Marigny and to old and new friends who spent the evening with us. The Center hopes to host similar events in cities across the Southeast in the future. If you would like to learn more about hosting an event in your hometown, contact Associate Director of Projects Becca Walton at rwalton@olemiss.edu.

Incoming Graduate Students, 2011

New Southern Studies graduate students pictured at Barnard Observatory in August 2011 are, left to right, front row: Kaitlyn Hodges (Presbyterian College), Madelyn Duffey (University of Colorado), Meghan Holmes (University of Alabama), Jillian McClure (Flagler College); second row: Joey Thompson (University of Alabama), Teah Hairston (San Jose State), Mel Lasseter (Agnes Scott College), Katie Lambert (University of Arkansas), Steven Saunders (Emory University); top row: Roy Button (University of California Berkeley), Matthieu Dessier (Institute of Political Studies of Grenoble and University of Mississippi), Katie Radishofski (University of Oregon), Patrick Weems (University of Mississippi), Chelsea Wright (Presbyterian College).



David Wharton

Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference: 50 Years after Faulkner: July 7–11, 2012

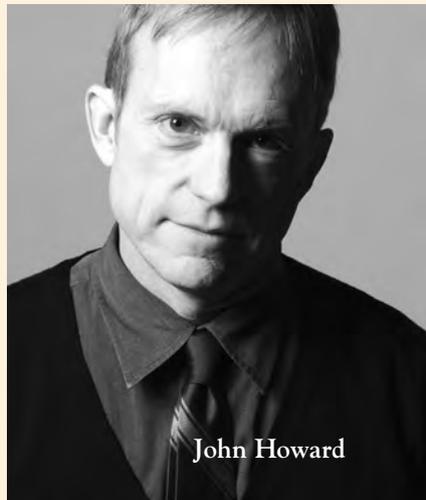
July 6, 2012, will mark the 50th anniversary of the death of William Faulkner. Such milestones prompt a reflective spirit, a desire to take stock of an author's life and achievement, and it is in that spirit that the 39th annual Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference will devote itself to the theme of "50 Years after Faulkner." A half-century is close to an eternity in the world of contemporary literary studies, with its rapid paradigm shifts and ever-inquisitive forays into other fields for new ideas. It stands to reason, then, that a pause to assess the state of Faulkner studies, and that of its principal subject, after 50 years might prove to be, as the old slogan had it, a pause that refreshes.

A significantly expanded lineup of invited lecturers and panelists will gather July 7–11 to address questions that bear on Faulkner's still-evolving legacies for U.S., Southern, and 20th-century letters. Panels will approach Faulkner's writings in the historical context of the civil rights movement and the cultural context of the Cold War, and will offer reassessments of *The Reivers*, also celebrating a 50th anniversary in 2012. Other sessions will focus on Faulkner's place in various constructions of the literary canon, probe the significance of death in his works, explore the various "afterlives" he has lived in popular culture and the work of artistic successors, and unveil "other Faulkners," new or unsuspected sides of the author and man.

Appearing at the conference for the first time as invited speakers will be Ted Atkinson, associate professor of English at Mississippi State University; Michael Bibler, lecturer in American literature and culture at Manchester University; David Davis, assistant professor of English at Mercer University; David Earle, assistant professor of English at West Florida University; Joseph Fruscione, lecturer in English at Georgetown University; John Howard, professor of American studies at King's College London; Gordon Hutner, professor of



Hortense Spillers



John Howard

English at the University of Illinois; Sharon Monteith, Professor of American Studies at the University of Nottingham; Alan Nadel, William T. Bryan Professor of American Studies at the University of Kentucky; Ramón Saldivar, Hoagland Professor of Humanities and Sciences at Stanford University; Mab Segrest, Fuller-Maathai Professor of Gender and Women's Studies at Connecticut College; Harilaos Stecopoulos, associate professor of English at the University of Iowa; and Sally Wolff-King, adjunct professor of English at Emory University. (It's especially gratifying to have a second chance to welcome Professor

Stecopoulos, who was on the program for last year's "Faulkner's Geographies" conference but had to cancel due to an emergency, to Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha.)

Returning to the conference are Deborah Clarke, professor of English at Arizona State University; Deborah Cohn, associate professor of Spanish and Portuguese at Indiana University; Cheryl Lester, associate professor of English and American studies at the University of Kansas; Richard Moreland, professor of English at Louisiana State University; François Pitavy, emeritus professor of English at the Université de Bourgogne; Hortense Spillers, Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor of English at Vanderbilt University; Terrell Tebbetts, Martha Heasley Cox Chair in American Literature at Lyon College; and Charles Reagan Wilson, Kelly Gene Cook Sr. Chair of History at the University of Mississippi.

Details are still being finalized for a writers' panel to feature contemporary authors commenting on Faulkner's life, art, and legacy. Additional speakers and panelists will be selected early next year from the conference call for papers, which can be viewed online at outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner.

Other events will include sessions on "Teaching Faulkner," conducted by James Carothers, University of Kansas; Charles Peek, Emeritus, University of Nebraska at Kearney; Terrell Tebbetts, Lyon College; and Theresa Towner, University of Texas at Dallas. There will also be a "Collecting Faulkner" session led by Seth Berner; an exhibition of Faulkner books, manuscripts, photographs, and memorabilia at the John Davis Williams Library; and an exhibition at University Museums. Optional daylong guided tours for participants will visit Faulkner-related sites in northeast Mississippi, the Mississippi Delta, and Memphis. Other conference events include a buffet supper, an afternoon cocktail party,

a picnic on the grounds of Faulkner's home, Rowan Oak, and an open mike evening, "Faulkner on the Fringe," at Southside Gallery on the Oxford Square.

Discount rates for the conference are available for groups of five or more students. Inexpensive dormitory housing is available for all registrants. Contact Robert Fox at rfox@olemiss.edu for details. There are also a limited number of conference registration waivers for graduate students. Contact Jay Watson at jwatson@olemiss.edu for details.

Please note also that high school teachers and graduate students at other universities who may be seeking a more intensive conference experience are invited to enroll in a 3-credit-hour graduate course, ENGL 566, which will be offered in conjunction with "50 Years after Faulkner." The course will meet from July 2 to 13, during the "Second Summer" session on the University of Mississippi academic calendar, and will include all conference lectures, panels, and related sessions in its schedule of contact hours. The intent is to complement the conference program by providing students with a deeper interpretive and pedagogical encounter with Faulkner's life and work in the form of transferable credit hours that can be applied to advanced degree programs or teacher certification requirements. The conference registration fee will be included in the course tuition, which is projected to be around \$975, and dormitory housing is available on the University campus for enrollees. Contact the instructor of record, Professor Jaime Harker, at jlharker@olemiss.edu for more details.

Finally, planning continues for "A William Faulkner Remembrance," a daylong schedule of community events commemorating Faulkner's death on July 6, 2012. All events will be free and open to the general public, including Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha registrants who decide to come to Oxford a day early to participate in the ceremonies. A detailed update on the remembrance will appear in the Winter 2012 issue of the *Southern Register*.

Jay Watson

Mississippi Delta Literary Tour, March 18–22, 2012

Organized by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, this annual spring tour focuses on the Mississippi Delta's legendary literature, blues, and food, along with its often-tumultuous history. The tour is based in Greenwood, with day trips to Greenville and Clarksdale. We will take a close look at the tour's home base, Greenwood, and include new excursions to Cleveland, Leland, and Carrollton.

This year the Delta tour will consider a tumultuous period in Mississippi history—the Mississippi civil rights movement—through a lively conversation on the best-selling novel *The Help*, by Kathryn Stockett. Literary scholar Marion Barnwell, UM journalism professor Deidra Jackson, and historian Mary Carol Miller will discuss the Delta during the Mississippi civil rights movement (a great deal of which occurred in Greenwood), the role of women (actual and fictional) in the movement, how the movement was portrayed in *The Help*, and controversies and praise regarding the novel and the subsequent blockbuster film. We will also take a guided bus tour of more than a dozen sites in Greenwood and the surrounding area that appear in the film. The day will end with a tour of and cocktails and dinner at Cotesworth in Carrollton—the historic house used as Celia Foote's home in the movie.



Cotesworth Culture and Heritage Center

Cotesworth in Carrollton, Mississippi, and Celia Foote's house in the film *The Help*. The Delta Tour will visit the house this year. To see more images of Cotesworth, go to the Cotesworth Culture and Heritage Center's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/CotesworthCenter

At the Cutrer Mansion in Clarksdale, University of Mississippi film and literature scholar Jack Barbera will give a talk on Tennessee Williams's Delta plays and screenplays, including *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*, *Baby Doll*, *Tiger Tail*, and *Orpheus Descending* and its versions. At St. George's Episcopal Church we will explore Tennessee's childhood as grandson of the church's rector.

We will also visit the art studio of folk artist Carolyn Norris (see book review on page 26), with novelist and scholar Dorothy Shawan, in Cleveland and tour the B. B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center in Indianola. Other stops will include Club Ebony in Indianola, various art galleries across the Delta, Turnrow Book Company in Greenwood, Cathead Records and Folk Art in Clarksdale, and McCormick Book Inn in Greenville. Other guides across the Delta will include Delta State University scholars Luther Brown and Henry Outlaw. Author and literary critic Marion Barnwell will speak in Greenwood on local authors, and architectural historian Mary Carol Miller will give a historical tour of the city.

The Delta tour is \$600 per person for all program activities, eight meals at local restaurants and by Delta caterers, and local transportation. The fee does not include lodging. Remember to sign up early. Only 40 spots are available, and they will go fast.

Group accommodations are offered 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 \$170.00 a night plus tax, which includes a full, Southern breakfast. Call 866-600-5201 and ask for the "Literary Tour" rate. Rooms are also available at the Greenwood Best Western, 662-455-5777, or the Hampton Inn, 662-455-7985.

For new and updated information please contact tour organizer Jimmy Thomas via e-mail at jgthomas@olemiss.edu or by telephone at 662-915-3374.

Southern Studies Alumni Tackle the Professions

Jake Ferris (BA 1989) recalls something the Center director said back in the late 1980s: “I still remember Bill Ferris telling me that I could do *anything* with a degree in Southern Studies.” To test that thesis, this article discusses Southern Studies alumni in the professions. It uses an old definition of the professions as people in the law, the ministry, and medicine—the only fields of expertise in the late 1800s that carried particular status, forms of learning, forms of address, and often forms of respect. For this article, I asked a number of alumni, who either came to Southern Studies as ministers or lawyers, or who went into the law, medicine, or the ministry as alumni, about the relationship between their degrees and their professional life or training.

The Law. Of the three traditionally defined professions, the law has attracted the most Southern Studies students. A large and growing number of alumni (not to mention four Southern Studies faculty and staff members) have gone to law school, and many—but not all—are practicing lawyers.

Several alums wrote that Southern Studies did a solid job preparing them for law school. Amanda Brown Wallis (BA 2006) practices law in the health care group at Phelps Dunbar LLP in Tupelo. A graduate of the University of Mississippi Law School, she recalled that “law school seemed very foreign at first. The Socratic method made my palms sweat, and I spent a lot of time reading about contracts and torts, which were not nearly as interesting or enjoyable as reading Rick Bragg or Jill McCorkle.” Ultimately, she decided her work as a Southern Studies major gave her “a distinct advantage in law school, which has subsequently carried over into my law practice. For me, the three most important components of my Southern Studies education were learning to read carefully, write well, and engage in thoughtful and creative analysis.”



Jake Morris



Mark Harrod

Mark Harrod (BA 2006), who also received a degree from the University of Mississippi Law School, practices law in Nashville, mostly “defending municipalities, municipal employees, and elected officials in civil lawsuits throughout middle Tennessee. My undergraduate courses, in particular the Southern Studies seminars, have proven beneficial in preparing me both for law school and the practice of law. Irrespective of the standard perception that litigators make their points (and their living) through arguments before the court, most of my time is spent reading and writing. I found that the Southern Studies undergraduate program engenders in its students an ability to study, comprehend, and discuss an inordinately wide variety of material—from art to economics.”

Walker Lasiter (BA 1990, MA 1996) agreed that an undergraduate Southern Studies major provided good training for law school. “The interdisciplinary approach was crucial to my study of the law, which required integration of concepts from many different areas.” Instead of going on to practice law, Lasiter returned to pursue a Southern Studies MA degree. From there he landed a job at the Louisiana



Eunice Milton Benton

Endowment for the Humanities, where he is now the Director of Grants and Federal Liaison. “I use my Southern Studies and law degrees daily,” he said, “whether reviewing contracts and providing opinions on trademark and copyright issues or vetting scholarly material in grant applications on Louisiana history and culture.”

In his third year at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, Brock Herrington (BA

Alison Traffanstedt Young



Miranda Cully Griffin



2008) has also found ways to connect law school with Southern Studies interests. At first he worried how his classmates would respond to a Southerner with a unique degree but was surprised that “everyone has been so fascinated by my Southernness. When I first started law school, everyone was captivated by my accent and loved to hear me speak. All of the people I met had these romanticized ideas about the South . . . or they imagined a region where people are always polite and are schooled in the most proper etiquette. I constantly have friends asking me to set them up with single friends from home.”

Asked about the relationship between Southern Studies and the practice of law, Joe Hairston (MA 1995) first discussed his job representing the Texas Association of School Boards. Hairston writes of the ways recent members of the Texas legislature tend to disparage all forms of government, state and federal. “Fortunately, Southern Studies gives me perspective about all of this. I simply close my eyes and pretend that I am in the South Carolina of John C. Calhoun. Southern Studies provides the consolation of knowing that Texans are not the first anti-American demagogues and surely will not be the last.”

The Ministry. Some people thinking about Southern Studies students in the ministry might first think of some rock bands, including the Apostles, the Circuit Riders, and the Preacher’s Kids, led by SST students. In fact, the pro-

gram has attracted several people who are actual ministers or went on to become ministers in training.

Eunice Milton Benton (MA 1995) writes that “for the fourteen years between 1997 and 2011 I lived and worked at the intersection of Southern culture and the Unitarian Universalist religious tradition—a unique and challenging locus from which to do ministry in the world!” Benton worked in the challenging position of the Mid-South District Executive for the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. “My academic studies and research—the most powerful of which had been documentary interviews with folks who had lived their lives as Unitarian Universalists in the South—coupled with my firsthand knowledge of the region’s culture allowed me to feel quite grounded in my work. Although the religious tradition with which I was involved had only a few strong stories in the South, I could see the enormous possibilities for linking the values of Unitarian Universalism with those of today’s contemporary South. The ‘green’ values that Unitarian Universalists champion have much common turf with a traditionally rural culture. The deep appreciation Unitarian Universalists have for community and covenant resonate with the South’s strong sense of place and its high valuing of tradition.”

Kyle Bennett (MA 1996) came to the program as a newly ordained priest with interests in Walker Percy and the

blues. “My first position after ordination was as the Episcopal Chaplain at Ole Miss and assistant at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church.” Bennett recalls the richness not just of Southern Studies classes but of friendships with fellow students. His thesis “was predominantly on the hill country blues and the lives of R. L. Burnside and Junior Kimbrough.” Bennett now lives “on the edge of the everglades at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church on beautiful Marco Island, where I have introduced the snowbirds to grits. I have not worn a black clerical shirt in six years, preferring a Hawaiian print one with shorts, although I still wear my seersucker and white bucks on Easter Sunday. Once a year we have a Y’all Fest, featuring a Bluegrass Mass and Southern home cooking.”

Among the alumni currently in divinity schools and religious studies programs, Miranda Cully Griffin (MA 2008) is in the process of discernment for the diaconate in the Anglican Church of North America. She came to Southern Studies knowing the importance of religion in the region’s culture and writes that the program helped make her “culturally sensitive to all the religious transformation that is sweeping over our (typically) conservative, evangelical Southern religion.” Now in her final year of seminary at Emory’s Candler School of Theology, Griffin writes, “I’m excited to apply my theology training to my cultural studies in order to reach people with the Gospel I feel called to proclaim.”

Sarah Condon (BA 2006), who is studying for the Episcopal priesthood at Yale Divinity School, writes of two connections between Southern Studies and the ministry. First, “I learned in Southern Studies that one of the most important things to remember is that everyone has a story. People have different ways of telling their stories and (more often than not) very different memories of the same stories. This is important and not to be overlooked. In ministry I have learned that people’s stories are most precious to them. Sharing those stories creates community (certainly a Southern Studies value) and a deeper sense of how our narra-

continued on page 29

Music of the South Homecoming to Mark 25th Anniversary of the Southern Studies MA

To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Southern Studies MA program, the Center is planning an event entitled Music of the South: A Southern Studies Homecoming. On March 2 and 3, all Southern Studies students, alumni, staff, and faculty (and likely some close friends and family) are invited to convene for two days of music and discussion of music. People wanting to participate as musicians or discussants should contact Ted Ownby at hsownby@olemiss.edu.

The idea for the event occurred to Center faculty and staff, especially Mark Camarigg of *Living Blues*, who were thinking about plans for the blues symposium. This year, the group decided, instead of having a blues symposium, we should emphasize the Center's musicians and its many people who have studied, written about, produced, and filmed music. Scholars can give papers. People who wrote theses on music can discuss them. And people who teach about music (or teach using music) or deal with music festivals, music tourism, document musicians, work as disc jockeys or in the recording industry, and do all sorts of other things involving music can discuss their work in panels designed for the purpose.

The big event will be a Saturday night 25th-anniversary concert at the Lyric Theatre on the Oxford Square. Emceed by Tyler Keith (MA 2011), that event, from 8:00 to midnight, will concentrate on people who are (or have been) professional musicians. The public will be invited, and we hope to see a large crowd of Center friends and alumni. As musicians begin to confirm they are attending, news will be made available through the Center's Facebook page and other media.

If there is significant interest, another music event emphasizing more acoustic music will take place Friday evening beginning at 6:00 in the Tupelo Room in Barnard Observatory. Sessions for people to discuss their work involving music will take place Friday afternoon in the Faulkner Room of the Library and Saturday afternoon in Barnard Observatory. Photography, film, and other media should also be important parts of the weekend's events. While the event marks the 25th anniversary of the MA program, students and alumni of the undergraduate program are also very welcome.

"Studying music and making music have been crucial to of the Center's history," said Center director, Ted Ownby, noting the Blues Today Symposium, *Living Blues*, *Highway 61*, the Music of the South Conference, the Elvis Presley Symposium, the role of Southern Studies in *Thacker Mountain Radio*, at least four Southern Studies prom events, and other projects past and present. "Some of us started to list the Southern Studies people who have been involved in music, and we stopped when the list reached over 100. This event should be both fun and smart, and we hope everyone involved or interested in the Center will come, whether they make music, write about it, listen to it, or just want to see and hear friends."



Jake Fussell, Southern Studies MA student

Jimmy Thomas

SFA Accolades in the Media

The press has been keeping up with the goings-on of the Southern Foodways Alliance. In their July/August 2011 issue, *Departures* follows our Southern BBQ Trail to taste some of the South's best barbecue. In August, *Time* magazine listed Broadcastr as one of the "10 Best iPhone Apps for Foodies," specifically because of the SFA's presence as a featured partner (audio clips from the entire SFA oral history archive are featured on Broadcastr.) Also in August, Hanna Raskin wrote on *Epicurious.com* about new marker erected on the Mississippi Blues Trail that's dedicated to hot tamales and was inspired, in part, by the SFA's Mississippi Delta Hot Tamale Trail



Barbara Pope, Joe's Hot Tamale Place; Amy Evans Streeter, SFA; Mississippi State Senator Willie Simmons.

Courtesy Amy Evans Streeter

oral history project. The Hot Tamales and the Blues marker in Rosedale is the first culinary marker in the state.

Joe York, the SFA's documentary filmmaker, was the focus of a three-page spread in the October/November 2011 issue of *Garden & Gun*, wherein he is called the "Ken Burns of Southern food." In September, *Southern Lens*, SCETV's independent film series, featured "South Carolina Foodways." The films, produced and directed by York, feature barbecue, pork, squirrel, seafood, and the people behind that food.

Julie Pickett

Works by Joe York and Media and Documentary Projects Abound

As a filmmaker and producer for Media and Documentary Projects, Joe York has traveled a staggering 40,000 miles over the past 18 months in search of savory morsels of Southern culture. His expeditions have been fruitful indeed, and in March, York premiered six short films at the Southern Foodways Alliance Potlikker Film Festival. Commencing the annual Charleston Wine + Food Festival, the documentaries presented viewers with a visual ecology of sundry South Carolinian traditions. In *Goat*, Victor “Goat” Lafayette tromps through the sodden earth, wresting oysters from the muddy banks of Bowens Island, just as he has done for nearly 50 years. In similar theme, *Bowens Island* depicts customers prying open mollusk shells with convivial spirit. Pig farmer Emile DeFelice limns an analogy between tango dancing and his deliberate approach to raising hogs in *Ride that Pig to Glory*, and in *Giving Thanks in Awenda* York captures a unique Thanksgiving pastime of the Colleton-Green family. *Carolina Grist* evinces the natural wonder and regional heritage of rice cultivation in South Carolina, and *Bertha’s* celebrates the filial devotion of three daughters’ homage to their mother’s culinary legacy.

Each short film requires around 6 to 10 hours of raw footage, a fact that underscores York’s tireless dedication as he churns out films that may ultimately



To Live and Die in Avoyelles Parish



contribute to *Pride and Joy: A Film about Southern Food*. York believes the feature-length project, formerly known as *Southern Food: The Movie*, has the potential to reach an audience his shorts cannot, as longer-format films are much more suitable for television airplay. The documentarian hopes this work will effectively demonstrate the diversity of the

region’s cuisine, and his recent efforts are certainly a testament to that ambition. For example, in early April, the passing of Constantine “Gus” Koutroulakis prompted York to produce a memorial film honoring the owner of Pete’s Famous Hot Dogs in Birmingham, while summer brought Joe and his crew to a Cajun county near the Mississippi border in Louisiana. There York recorded locals slow roasting *cochon-*

de-lait (suckling pigs) in front of an open fire, and the resulting film, *To Live and Die in Avoyelles Parish*, was screened in June at the Big Apple BBQ in Madison Square Park. York’s pork predilection is likewise evident in his latest release, *Cured*. The film trails Allan Benton to his Appalachian origins in Scott County, Virginia, where he conjures a mountain tradition for the camera, preparing a savory concoction of salt-cured pork, wild leeks, and potatoes—a dish often served after childhood treks through the mountain wilderness. As the proprietor of Benton’s Country Hams in Madisonville, Tennessee, Allan has been slow-curing ham and bacon since 1973, using recipes inherited from his parents.

York continues to make his work available online at southernfoodways.org, and the filmmaker’s talent and appeal are made manifest as viewing tallies on the website reach into the 10,000s.

Ride that Pig to Glory



Katie Radishofski

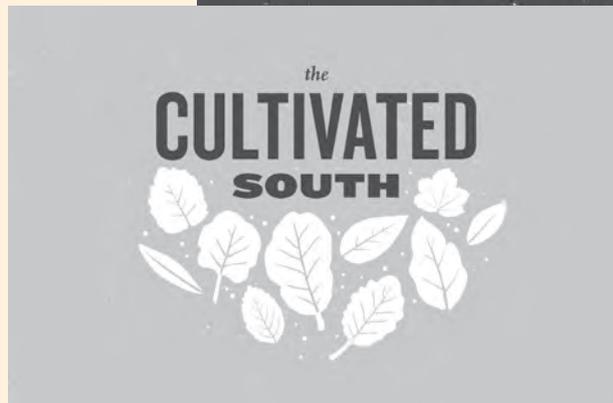
Speaker Highlights from the 14th Southern Foodways Symposium

This year's Southern Foodways Symposium on the Cultivated South was a huge success, thanks in large part to a dazzling and engaging bunch of speakers. Below, learn about a half-dozen of the scholars, writers, farmers, and activists who joined us in Oxford in October. If you missed the symposium, you can download podcasts of all of the talks on our iTunesU page.

Ed Davis is a professor of geography and environmental studies at Emory and Henry College in Virginia. He spoke on the origin and diffusion of collard greens as a cultural totem in the South, and he has a book forthcoming on the same topic. "I have been curious about several things: the decline of home gardening since World War II and the unique history, botany, and geography of collards as a leafy vegetable—none of the other vegetables have such an interesting background. No geographer has done a food study at this scale, since the South is such a large cultural region, so it made for a fascinating challenge."—Quote from an interview with Mary Lou Cheatham, June 2011

Elizabeth Engelhardt, professor of American studies at the University of Texas at Austin, is the author of *A Mess of Greens*. She spoke about the working-class farmwoman as prototypical locavore. "Greens can be seen as a protest against the time clock that industrialization introduced. Gathering greens served as a means for both men and women to resist new factory and mine-driven gender roles, as a walk in the woods did not involve company scrip or time clock."—Quote from an interview with Vivé Griffith, November 2005

Richard McCarthy is the director of Market Umbrella in New Orleans, Louisiana. He shared his hopes for small-scale agriculture and local farmers' markets in a dialogue with urban



farmer Rashid Nuri of Truly Living Well Natural Urban Farms in Atlanta. "Market Umbrella's particular belief in farmers' markets is the promise for these ancient mechanisms (when purposefully reinvented) to serve as platforms for experiential learning. Farmers and fishers learn about the consumer trends; shoppers learn about food sources and seasons. And ultimately, everyone learns about each other. Food is a discussion starter that takes us all into unknown territory about one another's lives."—Quote from an interview with the *Oxford American*, May 2010

Shirley Sherrod is a community organizer and rural activist. She is the former USDA director of rural development for the state of Georgia. She discussed the history of African Americans in Southern agriculture and shared her hopes for rural economic improvement and racial reconciliation. "I made the

commitment on the night of my father's death, at the age of 17, that I would not leave the South, that I would stay in the South and devote my life to working for change."—Quote from a speech given at the Georgia NAACP 20th annual Freedom Fund Banquet March 27, 2010, which resulted in Sherrod's forced resignation from the USDA.

Kevin Young is one of the most highly acclaimed contemporary poets in the country and a professor at Emory University. Though not all of his poetry focuses on food, he has written odes to such totemic Southern ingredients as pork and pepper vinegar. He delivered this year's opening address, in which he unpacked the term *cultivated*. "If we cannot see the ways soul food's ethos of reclamation and reuse—making more than making do, of taking leftovers and leavings and making them not only palatable but also desirable, *making it right*—if we cannot see this desire as not mere survival but a heroic act of reinvention—then we're missing out on a large part of the storying tradition of black culture."—From "Moanin'," by Kevin Young, *Tin House* vol. 13, no. 1

Sara Camp Arnold

Taste of the South at Blackberry Farm, January 12–15, 2012

Each year, Blackberry Farm, a luxe resort in the foothills of the Great Smokies, near Walland, Tennessee, hosts Taste of the South, a weekend-long event that benefits the Southern Foodways Alliance and convenes the Fellowship of Southern Framers, Artisans, and Chefs.

The Fellowship, which is administered by the SFA, fosters camaraderie and mentorship, honoring the bounty of the South and the hands that grow, nurture, and interpret its harvest. Taste of the South provides a forum for the region's most accomplished farmers, artisans, and chefs to break bread and share knowledge while reinforcing the sustaining bridge between field and table.

Weekend events include cooking classes, a grand dinner featuring guest chefs, lectures by a scholar in residence, whiskey tastings, wine tastings, expeditions into the countryside, and more. To register, call Kelley Clark Harris at 865-380-2271.

At this edition of Taste of the South, Will Harris of White Oak Pastures in Bluffton, Georgia, will be inducted as a Fellow. When Harris took over his family's cattle farm, established by his great grandfather in 1882, he relied on conventional methods such as corn feed and pesticides. All that changed about 10 years ago. Harris went organic. He introduced a variety of grasses to his 2,000 acres. He turned out about 650 cows to pasture. In order to control every stage of the process, Harris built a solar-powered processing plant on his farm, which also converts animal byproducts into liquid fertilizer. Since becoming the largest certified-organic farm in Georgia, Harris has become the beef director for the American Grassfed Association and the president of Georgia Organics. In 2009 White Oak Pastures was the regional winner of the Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award. That same year SFA produced *Cud*, a short documentary film on Harris and White Oak Pastures.

Guest scholar for 2012 will be Betty Fussell. For the past 50 years, Betty Fussell has been writing articles and books on the subject of what it is to be



Courtesy Blackberry Farm

Bob Vogt, Allan Benton, and Sharon Benton attend a tasting seminar at Blackberry Farm

an American, first looking at movies and theater, then at food. Her most recent book is *Raising Steaks: The Life and Times of American Beef*. In the book she takes up the historical epic she began in *The Story of Corn*, which won the International Association of Culinary Professionals' Jane Grigson Award for Scholarship. In between she wrote a food memoir, *My Kitchen Wars* (1999), which was performed in Hollywood and New York as a one-woman show by actress Dorothy Lyman.

Winemaker this year will be Ken Wright. One of the leaders of the Oregon wine industry, Wright came to know wine while working his way through college in Lexington, Kentucky. Now located in rural Carlton, Oregon, Ken Wright Cellars showcases the inherent quality of selected vineyard sites. Wright believes pinot noir best expresses the character of these sites, and it is pinot noir that we will taste and talk about this weekend.

Guest chefs this year include:

Adolfo Garcia of Rio Mar in New Orleans, Louisiana. A native of New Orleans, born to a Panamanian family, Adolfo Garcia runs a number of

New Orleans restaurants, including Rio Mar, which serves Spanish and Latin American seafood; La Boca, an Argentine steakhouse; and A Mano, an Italian trattoria. In 2010 the James Beard Foundation named Garcia a semifinalist for Best Chef: South.

Joshua Hopkins of Abattoir in Atlanta, Georgia. Hopkins has been a part of Anne Quatrano and Clifford Harrison's restaurant team since 2005. At Abattoir, where he has been chef and business partner since 2009, the focus is "whole animal cuisine." Named Restaurant of the Year in 2009 by *Atlanta* magazine, Abattoir is an ideal showcase for dishes like veal sweetbreads with apples and radishes.

Steven Satterfield of Miller Union in Atlanta, Georgia. In 2009 Satterfield, a veteran of Scott Peacock's tenure at Watershed, worked with manager Neal McCarthy to open Miller Union, named after the stockyards that once operated here. Since then, their restaurant has appeared on a number of "Best New Restaurants" lists and developed a reputation for its deep relationships with local farms.

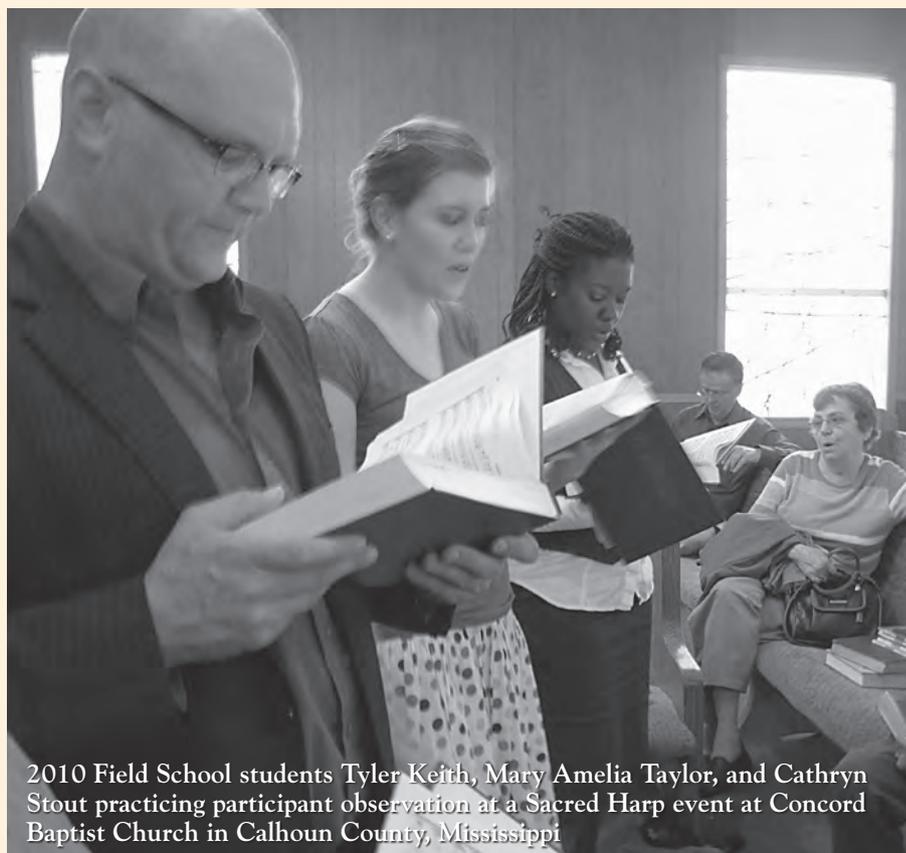
Henry Mencken

The Field School for Cultural Documentation

Oral histories recorded as part of the Field School for Cultural Documentation at the Center for the Study for Southern Culture are now available online. The oral histories are from a sampling of musicians from in and just outside the Oxford area, representing the large number of performers and musical styles in the area, including blues, bluegrass, and gospel. The oral historians were students taking part in the Field School class, which occurred during the 2007–2010 May intersessions at the University of Mississippi and was co-sponsored by the American Music Archive, the Center, and the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

Greg Johnson in the Department of Archives and Special Collections transferred the materials that comprise the collection. The American Music Archive at the University of Mississippi sponsored the Field School for Cultural Documentation program of the American Folklife Center.

Library of Congress folklorists Michael Taft, David Taylor, and Guha Shankar ran the program along with David Wharton, director of documentary studies and assistant professor of Southern Studies. Participants were students majoring in Southern Studies, music, and



2010 Field School students Tyler Keith, Mary Amelia Taylor, and Cathryn Stout practicing participant observation at a Sacred Harp event at Concord Baptist Church in Calhoun County, Mississippi

history. The program focused on teaching participants how to properly collect oral histories, interview subjects, operate audio recording equipment, and create audio logs. Students learned research ethics, project planning, and interviewing techniques, as well as how to write field notes and tape logs, operate recording equipment, and organize sound recordings.

These recordings can be found online at clio.lib.olemiss.edu/archives/fieldschool.php. Also, each interview can be accessed in the American Music Archive segment of the Blues Archive in Special Collections at the University Library. Greg Johnson, blues curator at the J. D. Williams Library, has worked to make sure every interview that is a part of the Field School has been placed online for public access to the extensive studies. “People anywhere in the world can sign on and listen to the audio of people and subjects they are interested in,” Johnson said. Interviews, additional collected data, and photographs are compiled into digital outline form.

In the four years of the program’s ex-

istence, 30 students have taken part in this study and 48 interviews have been recorded. “It was an important thing to do,” said Wharton. “Students got really involved, and it was great to be able to contribute to future knowledge about folk music and gospel music and talk to people who perform for the love of doing it rather than for commercial reasons.”

Mary Margaret Miller, a Southern Studies graduate and current heritage director with the Mississippi Arts Commission, said being in the Field School was a life-changing experience. “Not only did it open doors to allow me to continue my passion for documentary fieldwork, but it also prepared me to enter the world of public sector folklife, which includes grant writing, among many other aspects,” she said. “The Field School gives students real work experience, which translates to real jobs after graduation. Oxford and the surrounding area offer an endless array of stories, traditions, and art forms that need to be documented and shared.”

Taylor Coombs

Lynn & Stewart

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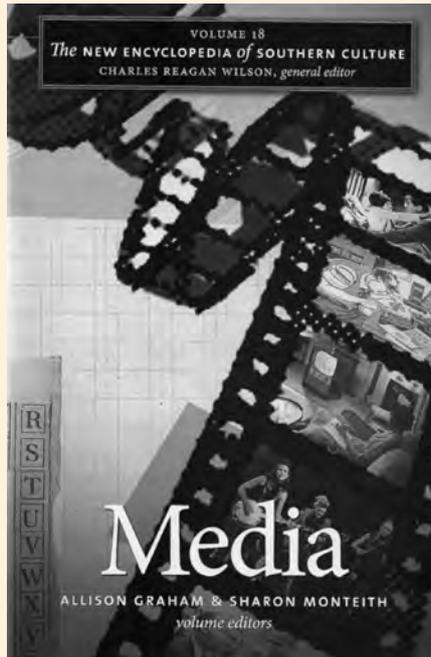
The Gammill Gallery, located in Barnard Observatory, is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., except for University holidays.
Telephone: 662-915-5993.

The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture Adds Two New Books: Media and Violence

The University of North Carolina Press and the Center for the Study of Southern Culture have recently produced two new volumes of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture: Media and Violence*. The new publications bring the number of volumes produced thus far to 19 out of an eventual 24. The Press and the Center are both now taking orders. (For order information, see page 22.)

Historically, the South's expression in the media, like many other aspects of Southern culture, has seemed to set the region apart from the rest of the country. When one thinks of the South in terms of its representation in the media, oftentimes, if not most often, extreme examples come to mind (for a variety of reasons elucidated between the covers of this book): the films *Deliverance*, *Gone with the Wind*, and *Mississippi Burning*; the popular television shows *Hee-Haw* and *The Andy Griffith Show*; and the broadcasting giants Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), The Nashville Network (TNN), and Cable News Network (CNN). It is too easy, though, to simply consider these products of the South within a purely Southern context, and volume editors Allison Graham and Sharon Monteith have produced a volume on media in and of the South that not only defines its subject within a Southern context but that "look[s] at Southern-associated media as an arena of ongoing, reciprocal borrowing and transformation." For example, in their overview essay to the volume, the editors describe how the film *Deliverance* "drew upon inspirations as diverse as Hemingway, southern gothic literature, Depression-era photojournalism, 'hillbilly' movies, horror films, Hollywood Westerns, James Fennimore Cooper's novels, and European romances (all interpreted by South Carolina author James Dickey and John Boorman, a director from Middlesex, in the U.K.)."

Coincidentally, the editors' academic homes are as different as the native lands of Dickey and Boorman—Graham



is a professor of communications at the University of Memphis and Monteith is a professor of American studies at the University of Nottingham, in the U.K. Both editors tapped scholastic resources from their own backyards, with Monteith recruiting contributors from places like the University of Cork, the University of Manchester, and her own University of Nottingham, and with Graham recruiting contributors from

across the South. Despite the seemingly disparate perspectives of the editors and the contributors, the volume comes together as seamlessly as Dickey and Boorman's legendary film. The volume's subjects range from the early days of radio and New South journalism to Internet representations of the South, photojournalism, and Spanish-language newspapers. The expected media has found its rightful place in the volume, but some of the more surprising entries include "Bakker, Jim and Tammy Faye," "The Beatles and Jesus Controversy," "Jefferson, Thomas, and Sally Hemings," "Monroe, Sputnik," "Presley, Elvis, Dead on Film," and "Telemundo," making the book a unique resource for both the media-curious and those seeking to understand the ways in which mass media have influenced and maintained the idea of a culturally unique South while drawing from a wide array of influences—and influencing the national media culture at large.

Violence, too, has long been a benchmark indicator of Southernness. Amy Louise Wood, volume editor and associate professor of history at Illinois State University, opens her overview essay to the *Violence* volume by making this point clear: "Over the past 400 years, violence of all sorts has bloodied the southern landscape: from the whipping and torture of slaves to slave revolts, from gentlemen's duels to backwoods feuding, from the brutal backlash against Reconstruction in the 1860s to the massive resistance against civil rights protests in the 1960s. Murder rates in southern states have long exceeded those in other states, and southerners, both black and white, have historically been more disposed to step outside the law to settle personal grievances than other Americans. Even today, southerners are more likely to own and use guns, to favor a strong national defense, and to condone the corporal punishment of children, all of which

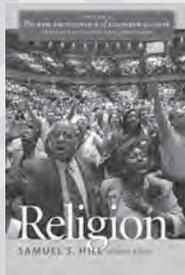
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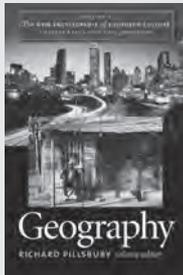
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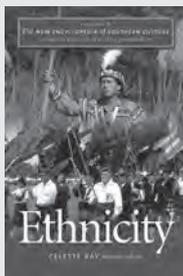
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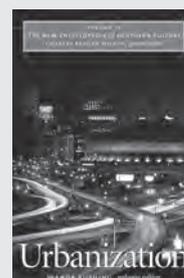
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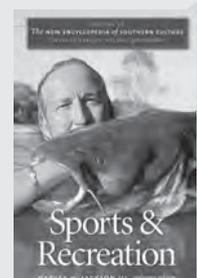
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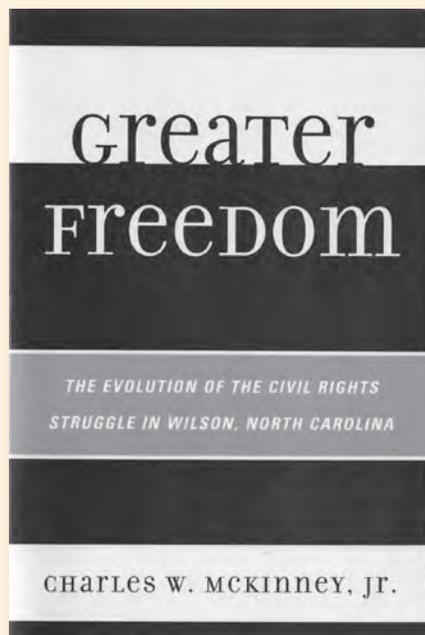
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Reading the South

Greater Freedom: The Evolution of the Civil Rights Struggle in Wilson, North Carolina.

By Charles W. McKinney Jr.
Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2010. 258 pages.
\$41.50 cloth.

Wilson, North Carolina, may seem like an improbable community through which to analyze grassroots civil rights activism, especially to readers unfamiliar with this county and mid-level city. Even a majority of the area's own residents would likely select events and people elsewhere when highlighting the crucial developments of the movement years. Many subscribe to the collective memory fashioned in the years since, that the state steered a moderate course through the 1950s and '60s and that the ugly and violent reactions to the movement occurred in other parts of the South. For Charles W. McKinney Jr., an assistant professor of history at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, these perceptions demonstrate exactly why Wilson is ripe for a deeper look. In *Greater Freedom* he uncovers many of the all-too-familiar hallmarks of the region from the 1930s through the 1970s—of lynchings and the ever-present threat of violence, of the economic discrimination that created a permanent underclass, and of a mostly civil but nonetheless massive resistance to any potential breach of the status quo. Fitting squarely within some of the prevailing trends in the scholarship of the civil rights movement—taking a more expansive view in time and structure, questioning the roles of class and gender, and focusing on unheralded people and the community level—McKinney finds that black men and women of all classes in



Wilson fought through the various facets of life under Jim Crow to achieve a “greater freedom,” an unremitting objective centered on self-determination and economic and political equality.

Before beginning to trace the inception of the movement in Wilson in the 1930s, McKinney provides a helpful crash course in the history of the county. Wilson lay in the heart of tobacco country and by World War II had led the world in the production and sale of bright leaf tobacco. Those who were not part of the professional elite and emerging middle class drifted from farm tenancy and sharecropping to warehouse and factory work, depending upon the stage in the tobacco season. For business leaders and promoters, Wilson was a fine-tuned economic engine that buttressed their vision of an amicable New South; for black laborers, Wilson was a perpetual wheel of dependency that exemplified the oppressive reality of Jim Crow America. The bulk of African Americans in East Wilson felt the ef-

fects of economic segregation, of inferior housing and schools and access to city services. Yet the story of the movement as such did not begin with the working class, but with a small group of black professionals who believed they were fighting for the black community at large. A few of them helped form the city's first chapter of the NAACP in 1932, and that group played a vital role in shepherding various legal challenges to Jim Crow in Wilson in the succeeding decades. McKinney is mostly interested in the work of locally inspired men and women engaging in uplift and protest, often doing so quietly. In the years surrounding World War II, the Colored Junior Women's Club and the Men's Civic Club (MCC)—both composed of middle- and upper-class African Americans—organized voter-registration drives and lobbied white leaders to improve conditions in East Wilson. The Women's Club members, for instance, spearheaded the creation of East Wilson's first community library, which they then convinced the city to help fund.

After World War II, the working class of Wilson County reenters the narrative as the focus in the quest for greater freedom. Black women provided the core of new local chapters of the Tobacco Worker's International Union, formed in 1946. A group of black sharecroppers and tenants, led by the county's largest black landowner and former tenant farmer, Mark Sharpe, threatened a lawsuit against the school board to demand equality in education. The insistence by the parents for separate but equal facilities was modest but fit within the equalization strategy that framed legal challenges at the time and the “racial diplomacy” that was common among many in Wilson. As

Book Reviews and Notes by Faculty, Staff, Students, and Friends of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture

McKinney explains, most African Americans in Wilson recognized that equalization could have an immediate effect. In the end, the threat worked and the board capitulated to a point; they ordered two new black high schools and a bus, but no driver. The years of building up the voting rolls finally bore fruit in the early 1950s when one of the city's black elite and veteran leaders, G. K. Butterfield, nudged out his white opponent for a temporary seat on the city's Board of Alderman, a result owing mostly to mobilization of East Wilson's black working class.

As elsewhere, the racial climate of Wilson shifted dramatically in the wake of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. McKinney's analysis of the reactions by white leaders and the subsequent rise of massive resistance will be familiar to most students of the era, though it should be particularly informative to those who would prefer to believe that such responses did not prevail among white North Carolinians. McKinney describes how the white political and economic leaders employed a tactic of "preemptive management" where cities would permit token integration while blocking more significant structural changes or even scaling back on gains in other areas. For instance, the city authorized the integration of the city's professional baseball stadium after a well-orchestrated campaign by local black citizens but then followed that breakthrough with a move toward an at-large local government system that effectively diluted the black vote and brought Butterfield's tenure to an end. Other times, an even uglier side of preemption emerged, as when one of the key social spaces for all East Wilsonians, Darden High School, fell victim to an arson attack just days after the first Greensboro sit-in. Fear of violent reprisals muted public or radical responses during the period where student-led sit-ins swept through other cities in the South, though

McKinney blames black elite as well for employing their own form of preemptive management by working to confine protests through the MCC and traditional channels.

In the mid-1960s the issue of housing provided Wilson's civil rights movement to finally shake loose of its conservative and middle- and upper-class moorings. East Wilson suffered from an acute housing shortage, and the two public housing projects that did exist were dilapidated and contained water wells that were contaminated. Residents of one project began appearing regularly at city board meetings to present petitions and demands for improvements. The city could no longer ignore the years of neglect, and other working-class residents joined in the effort, culminating in the formation of new indigenous civic groups, none more important and sustaining than the Wilson Community Improvement Association (WCIA). The organization, made up mostly of black women, spearheaded a variety of civil rights and community organizing activities, but McKinney explains that the efforts targeting the poor and working class of Wilson were the most vital. The WCIA led the effort to integrate the city's industries, supported a strike by the city's sanitation workers, and, perhaps most significantly, kept pressure on the city board to apply for grants from the newly created federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for hundreds of new low-income homes.

McKinney weaves a complex but coherent narrative of the ways African Americans of all classes labored to obtain equality and self-determination in Wilson, yet he clearly wants the reader to understand that the working class and the poor ultimately were not only active but were often behind the efforts that were the most necessary. His aim to redirect the narrative away from male and middle- and upper-class reformers and to highlight gender and the role of working-class women in

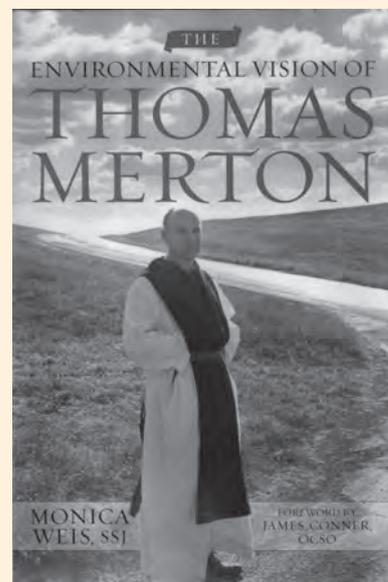
particular is achieved, though this reader would like to have read more about their individual and collective motivations and the implications of female leadership in the community. McKinney should be particularly commended for the breadth of time he covers and for his healthy mix of primary and secondary sources, with the most revealing moments in the book coming from the more than 50 interviews he conducted with local citizens.

C. Dalton Lyon

The Environmental Vision of Thomas Merton.

By Monica Weis. SSJ.
Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2011. 197 pages.
\$40.00 cloth.

By the time Thomas Merton published his autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, in 1948—at the strikingly early age of 33—he had already experienced much of the world. Born to expatriate parents in France and brought to the U.S. as an infant, he became motherless at six. Soon after, he accompanied his artist father to Bermuda, then back to France, then to England where he was orphaned at



16. For the next 10 years, he led a restless and reckless life before taking a dramatic change of direction by converting to Roman Catholicism and settling at age 26 into the only stable home he would have in his 53 years on earth: the Monastery of Our Lady of Gethsemani in Trappist, Kentucky.

At the time, Merton naturally assumed that by entering the monastery he was disappearing from the world, silencing his voice forever to those outside the cloister. However, in an ironic story familiar to many readers of contemporary spiritual literature, Thomas Merton's first abbot, recognizing in the young monk the need to write, encouraged him to do so. At the time of his death in 1968 Merton had published over 30 books, and in the years since then the Thomas Merton Trust has provided materials for more than 30 additional publications, a corpus containing voluminous letters and journals and a rich source of direct contact with the lively and expansive mind of one of the 20th century's most popular hermits.

The Environmental Vision of Thomas Merton by Monica Weis, SSJ, draws masterfully upon this personal correspondence and private note keeping to show how Merton's enjoyment of nature grew into a deeply spiritual experience, eventually becoming inextricably part of his monastic prayer life and propelling him to unite his voice with those speaking out against abuse of the earth. Weis, professor of English at Nazareth College in Rochester, New York, has a high profile in the field of Merton studies, having written widely on Merton's relationship with nature. Her long familiarity with the subject, in addition to her compatibility with Merton's views, gives *The Environmental Vision of Thomas Merton* an authoritative and persuasive voice.

One item of personal writing that features prominently in the book is Merton's 1963 letter to Rachel Carson, in which he extols her provocative argument in *Silent Spring*, confesses his own "folly" of using pesticides, and asks Carson's advice about treating some afflicted trees under his care as a forester of the monastery. In chapter 1, Weis analyzes the letter mainly to show "the literary and conceptual resonances" between the two writers; she returns to the letter in the final chapter, "Merton's Evolving Ecological Consciousness," to point out the seeds of Merton's prophetic affinity for what would today be called issues of eco-theology and eco-justice.

The Environmental Vision of Thomas Merton also reflects the significance of rural Kentucky in the awakening of Merton's perception that the created world is holy and of his conviction that human beings are supposed to be responsible stewards of it all. In the introduction Weis allows that "nature was always important in Thomas Merton's life," and she devotes an ear-

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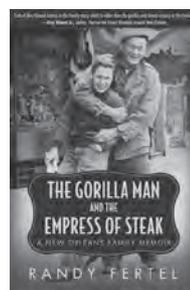
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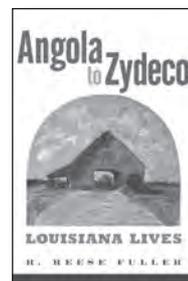
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ly chapter to establishing Merton's youthful "gift of awareness and sense of place"—largely by citing passages from *The Seven Storey Mountain* and evidence from *Tom's Book*, a record, painstakingly maintained by his mother, of his first years. The author centers her study, however, on how Merton's daily connection with the landscape of Gethsemani influenced him as a poet, photographer, contemplative monk, and environmental advocate.

In one chapter Weis examines specific entries from Merton's journals in which he relates his experiences of impetuously climbing a Kentucky knob in a cold rain, witnessing a hawk preying on a starling, and listening to the bullfrogs and birds in the predawn darkness. Weis quotes generously from these accounts, which she compares to Wordsworthian "spots of time." These accounts mark Merton's encounters with God as revealed in nature and the epiphanies that heightened his awareness of the intricate web of life and that further enriched his meditative practice.

In a section that Weis calls "central" to her book, she analyzes additional passages from Merton's journals, "spanning several years" in an effort to systematically convey the widening of nature's influence on Merton. Weis notes an increasing frequency of references to nature in Merton's journals and groups these references into four categories: those that reflect his "poetic eye" as he observes his surroundings, those that contain "extended metaphors" used to capture the mysteries contained in what he sees, those that give "weather reports" on both the outer and inner climate of his daily existence, and those that merge the "inner and outer landscapes" of his locale into prayer. Weis's original grouping effectively demonstrates the progress of Merton's physical, imaginative, philosophical, and spiritual connection with the place in which he spent the majority of his adult life.

The Environmental Vision of Thomas Merton has potential appeal for a wide audience. Merton enthusiasts, environmental activists, and readers who delight in lyrical and sensory-rich evocations of southern terrain and wildlife can all find something satisfying within these pages.

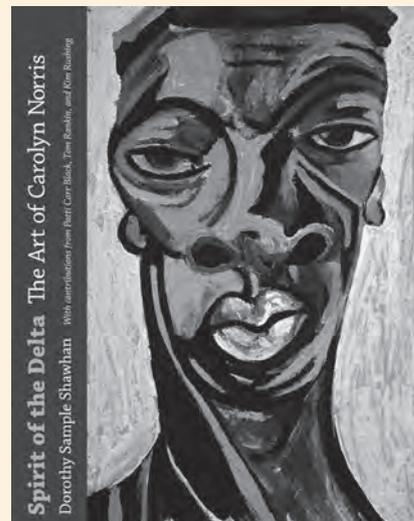
Deborah Kehoe

Spirit of the Delta: The Art of Carolyn Norris.

By Dorothy Sample Shawhan, with contributions from Patti Carr Black, Tom Rankin, and Kim Rushing. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2011. 128 pages, 115 color illustrations. \$35.00 cloth.

Those living in and around Cleveland, Mississippi, have watched the evolution of Carolyn Norris's artwork from the palette of her small garage door. Norris's garage door paintings serve somewhat as a billboard of community memory, depicting the smiles of neighborhood children or the victory of the local ball team. Inside her neat home you will find paintings created on cloth, paper, particleboard, and sometimes canvas. A bust of the artist created by fellow Bolivar County creator Emma Lytle sits stoic in the corner of the studio, showing just one of the many faces of Carolyn Norris. For those outside of the area, a peek into the creative life and unique perspective of this self-taught artist can be found between the covers of *Spirit of the Delta: The Art of Carolyn Norris*.

Black Madonna, a pivotal piece that pushed Norris to continue exploring her talents as a painter, was created while holding a baby to her breast with one hand and a brush to a wooden dresser drawer with the other. Norris started the image with house paint, and when that ran out she finished the project with a stash



of face make-up gifted to her by a kind social worker.

For Norris, paintings are inspired by the emotion of everyday life. "I'm attached to 'em while I'm doin' 'em, and after I get through with 'em I'm through with 'em," Norris tells Tom Rankin in a 1991 interview included in the book. "And I'm ready to go on, because there is so much more I can get attached to. Too much for me to hold on to."

Norris was born in 1948 in rural West Virginia, sheltered from the realities of racial conflict and prejudice. She moved to Mississippi at age 22, following the father of her two oldest children to Bolivar County, where she says she "grew up at." "You know, you only a child when you leave home, and nobody ain't told you what's gonna happen, look like. So you might say I experienced and learned and matured right here in the South."

Norris's experience in the South is explored in the interview with Rankin, where she not only speaks of her first sight of the magical, mystical cotton plant, but also of her introduction to the segregated South: a one-of-a-kind story about walking in the white entrance of a local drug store, only to have the pharmacist sit her down, buy her a coffee, and explain the ways of the Deep South. The Rankin interview does well to explore the painter's inspirations

The 19th Oxford Conference for the Book

and technical practice, including Norris's tendency to paint for days and nights at a time.

Her life and influences are further explored in a warm, well-written introductory essay by the book's author, Dorothy Sample Shawhan. Shawhan, chair emerita of the Division of Languages and Literature at Delta State University, is a close friend and mentor to Norris. Shawhan gives the reader a strong picture of Norris's development as a self-taught artist, recounting the beginning of Norris's role as a public art figure with her 1985 entry and placement at the Crosstie Arts Festival. An essay by Patti Carr Black gives context to the time and place of Norris's creative development. She also works to create context for Norris as a "self-taught" artist and to break the stereotypes often associated with such terms in the academic art world.

"In the final analysis, Norris's art cannot be described by a predominant style or a coherent cultural ethos," writes Carr Black. "Her work is simply embedded in its own time and place, in her life as a woman living in Cleveland, Mississippi, making a living as a cleaning woman, trying to shepherd her intense drive to paint."

Spirit of the Delta: The Art of Carolyn Norris includes 115 color illustrations created by Norris between the early 1960s and present day—predominantly portraits and genre scenes. Norris uses multiple mediums, materials, and techniques, but no matter the method Norris employs in her work, the paintings are most often narrative, sharing the experiences of Norris, her family, and her neighbors. This collection provides a unique perspective of communal life in the Mississippi Delta—one that broadens our understanding of place, space, and experience in the modern world.

Mary Margaret Miller

The 19th Oxford Conference for the Book, set for March 22–24, 2012, will begin on Thursday with a library lunch and a panel on the history of the book in America. The conference will continue through Saturday with addresses, panels, and readings. Speakers will include notable authors, editors, publishers, and others in the book trade as well as educators, literacy advocates, and readers of all ages. Fifth and ninth graders will join the audience on Friday morning for sessions with authors of books for young readers. The conference edition of *Thacker Mountain Radio*, a fiction and poetry jam, and a marathon book signing at Off Square Books are also part of the festivities. The slate of speakers is not yet final, but many of those confirmed are announced here.

Several panels will discuss biography and memoir, with Curtis Wilkie moderating a panel on writing biography and William Dunlap moderating a discussion of "The Urge to Memoir." Beth Ann Fennelly, poet and associate professor at the University of Mississippi, will lead a celebration of National Poetry Month with readings and a talk by Nicole Cooley and Brad Richard. Conference panel topics will include "Writing about Civil Rights," moderated by Charles Reagan Wilson; "Geography in Fiction: Real and Imagined," moderated by W. Ralph Eubanks; and a panel considering the art of bookmaking. John T. Edge of the Southern Foodways Alliance will talk about food writing, and Richard Howorth of Square Books will host a discussion on the future of publishing. Lyn Roberts and Tom Franklin will host readings, and David D. Hall, colonial historian at Harvard and editor of a series of volumes on the history of the book in America, will give a talk on the history of the book.

Each year the conference showcases two writers for young people. All Oxford-area fifth- and ninth-grade students (nearly 1,700 readers) receive their own copies of books by the visitors and hear the authors speak about writing and reading. Students from Mississippi Teacher Corps and Teach for America schools in the area (about 400 readers) will also attend these sessions. Elise Broach will discuss her work with fifth graders, and James Dashner will speak to ninth graders.

The Center has introduced a new blog for the conference, which can be found at www.conferenceforthebook.tumblr.com. As the conference approaches, the blog will be the central place to learn about the schedule, authors, and special events planned for March. A comprehensive schedule will be posted late this fall, and the Center will periodically blog items of interest to readers.

The University of Mississippi and Square Books sponsor the conference in association with the Junior Auxiliary of Oxford, Lafayette County and Oxford Public Library, Lafayette County Literacy Council, Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance, and the Southern Literary Trail. Funding comes from the R&B Feder Foundation for the Beaux Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Mississippi Arts Commission, the Mississippi Humanities Council, LOFT, and the Oxford Tourism Council.

Find the Center through Social Media

Keep up with the many events at the Center through social media. Find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/SouthernStudies](https://www.facebook.com/SouthernStudies) and on Twitter at [@SouthernStudies](https://twitter.com/SouthernStudies). As we prepare to update and redesign our website, Facebook is the best source for information on upcoming events.

Our new Tumblr Blog, southernstudiesatuofm.tumblr.com, features the work of Center institute and partner Media and Documentary Projects, as well as that of students in the documentary photography and filmmaking classes led by David Wharton and Andy Harper. Visit this page regularly to see the diverse creative and scholarly work of students and faculty.

Graduate Assistantship Established by the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Foundation

A generous contribution from Mr. Stephen Land McDavid allowed the Center to establish a graduate assistantship for a student to work with the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Foundation, an innovative national group headquartered in Oxford. The Foundation, working with 54 partner schools located primarily in Appalachia but including the University of Mississippi, encourages philanthropy and service and empowers students to recognize community needs and address them.

The Foundation presents awards to students demonstrating a commitment to community service and hosts a fall retreat at which students learn the entrepreneurial principles needed to organize and manage nonprofit organizations. Colleges choose participants based on students' character and commitment to service. Students learn to create business plans and budgets as well as other skills essential to running an effective organization. Through this training program the Foundation hopes to create a "generation of leading Southern problem-solvers" with a passion for social justice and the practical skills needed to transform communities.

Supporting this mission as the initial recipient of the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Foundation assistantship is first-year graduate student Joey Thompson. Joey works alongside Southern Studies MA alum Rebecka Batey Camarigg (2009), who serves as the Foundation's Director of Programs. Current projects include preparing for the fall retreat and seeking corporate sponsorships for students to attend the Foundation's leadership training programs.

Becca Walton

CONTRIBUTORS

Sara Camp Arnold served as intern for the Southern Foodways Alliance this past summer. This fall she returned to Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where is a graduate student in folklore at the University of North Carolina. Sara is also the editor of *Gravy*, the SFA's quarterly food letter.

Brett Bonner is the editor for *Living Blues* magazine.

Mark Camarigg is the former assistant editor and current publications manager for *Living Blues* magazine.

Georgeanna Chapman is a Southern Studies MA graduate. She lives in Lexington, Kentucky.

Rebecca Lauck Cleary is a communications specialist in the Office of Media and Public Relations at the University of Mississippi. She received a BA in journalism from the University in 1997.

Taylor Coombs is a student in the school of journalism and new media and writes for the Office of Media and Public Relations at the University of Mississippi.

Lisa Howorth is a retired bibliographer and assistant professor of art and southern studies at the University of Mississippi. She has edited two books for the Center: *The South: A Treasury of Art and Literature*, and *Yellow Dogs, Hushpuppies, and Bluetick Hounds: The Official Encyclopedia of Southern Culture Quiz Book*.

Deborah Kehoe teaches English at Northeast Mississippi Community College and professional report writing at the University of Mississippi. She has published articles on Thomas Merton in the *Merton Annual*, the *Merton Seasonal*, and *Christianity and Literature*.

Colby H. Kullman is professor of English at the University of Mississippi. Among his publications are *Theatre Companies of the World* and articles on Tennessee Williams and other modern dramatists.

C. Dalton Lyon, a native of Kentucky, received his doctorate at the University of Mississippi in 2010 and currently chairs the history department at St. Mary's School in Memphis.

Henry Mencken is a reclusive writer, whose family has long lived in Maryland.

Mary Margaret Miller is heritage director for the Mississippi Arts Commission. She is also a graduate of the Southern Studies program.

Ted Ownby, director of the Center, holds a joint appointment in Southern Studies and history.

Julie Pickett is the office administrator for the Southern Foodways Alliance. Her duties range from copy editing to database entry to posting the Thirsty Thursday blog and beyond.

Kathryn Radishofski earned her BA from the University of Oregon and is a current Southern Studies MA student.

Amy Evans Streeter is the oral historian for the Southern Foodways Alliance.

Jimmy Thomas is the Center's associate director of publications. He is managing editor of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* and editor of the *Southern Register*.

Becca Walton is the Center's associate director of projects. She has a MA in Southern Studies in 2008 and joined the Center staff this September.

Jay Watson is a professor of English at the University of Mississippi. His publications include *Forensic Fictions: The Lawyer Figure in Faulkner and Faulkner and Whiteness* (forthcoming). He is the current president of the William Faulkner Society.

tives connect us all to something bigger than ourselves.” Second, Condon discussed how parts of Southern Studies suggested that it was necessary to deal with tragedies and imperfections before it is possible to think about redemption. “This foundation was imperative to take with me into Divinity school.”

Medicine may seem the least likely pursuit for Southern Studies alumni, but several work in medicine and counseling. Warren Black (BA 2002), once the leader of the previously mentioned Circuit Riders, works in Nashville “at Cumberland Heights, a treatment center for alcoholism and addiction. My goal is to become a psychiatric nurse practitioner who is also credentialed in counseling,” and he reports that he has been taking science and psychology classes to prepare.

Dan “Jake” Morris is professor of psychology and counseling at Lipscomb University in Nashville. After receiving his BA in 1989, he took several ministerial positions, and he writes that “the relationship between region and religion continues to fascinate me (thank you Charles Wilson).” While working at a church in Arkansas, he took a counseling course and decided to pursue psychology. “For me, the connections between Southern Studies and psychology are quite obvious. We communicate differently. We think differently. We have a different relationship with violence. We have unique connections with family. We have unique connections with community. I think it is also interesting to think about the unique relationship that Southern families and communities have with eccentric (abnormal) behaviors.” Morris compared two understandings of the past: “As a counselor, I gravitate toward the role that the individual past plays in our psyche. As a Southern Studies major, I gravitate toward the role that our regional past plays in our collective and individual psyches.”

Elizabeth Taylor Barton (BA 1991) also emphasized storytelling as a connection between Southern Studies and counseling. While working as a headmaster’s assistant in Nashville she recognized her interest in young people and enrolled in Vanderbilt’s Peabody University to pursue a master’s degree in human development counseling. For the past five years, Barton has worked as a counselor for students at St. Andrews Episcopal School in Jackson. “Upon reflection, I am able to make some correlation between my Southern Studies background and my current role as counselor. Some of my favorite things about the Southern Studies program included learning about people. Stories have always been so important. I think about my folk art class and the fun I had interviewing Uncle Ern, the basket maker from Goodman, Mississippi. I also think about the blues class where I learned about stories through music. So, I think Southern Studies did help me develop my curiosity of human nature. I believe my primary role as a counselor is to provide a safe, quiet space for people to share their stories.”

When she becomes a doctor of podiatry, Alison Traffanstedt Young may finally prove, as Bill Ferris told students years ago, that Southern Studies alumni *can* in fact do anything. Young (MA 2006) will enter the Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine in Chicago in Fall 2012. She writes that Southern Studies and other work in the humanities “helped me engage with individuals and communities in a more thoughtful and open way and to think more critically about the factors contributing to health issues, which is unfortunately something that is often lacking in people who go into the healthcare industry.” Asked about the connections between Southern Studies and podiatry, Young writes that one of her biggest goals “is to figure out a way to concretely use both my podiatry degree and my Southern Studies degree. I think there is probably a demand in certain communities for someone who can treat not just podiatric problems (diabetes, for example, has huge foot/lower leg-related implications) but also help address other underlying issues that are bigger than individual health.”

Ted Ownby

suggests a greater level of comfort with the use of violence to resolve social problems.”

But Wood goes on to point out that the volume does not attempt to make the case that the South has been exceptionally violent; indeed, mob violence, the Ku Klux Klan, and racial segregation were not Southern phenomena, and violence in America has long been central to the construction of American ideologies and identities. *Violence* “chronicles many of the varied ways in which violence erupted in the South and the impact it had, on individuals, on communities, and on the nation as a whole.” Blood sports are covered, as are the Hatfields and McCoys, the Alamo, antiabortion violence, honor, dueling, and organized crime, but the lion’s share of the material in the volume points to the racial violence that has “marked southern culture and that has shaped southern history in dramatic ways,” with entries on the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., convict leasing, the Atlanta race riots, lynching, Emmett Till, and violence against American Indians and Mexican Americans dominating the text.

The thematic combination of violence instigated by racial prejudices and violence initiated by a historically rooted culture of honor make this *Violence* volume a sometimes-grotesque yet necessary lens through which to observe the Southern past—and sometimes its present. Perhaps not surprisingly, Dickey and Boorman’s *Deliverance* makes an appearance in this volume too.

Jimmy Thomas

The Southern Culture Catalog is now available exclusively online. We will continue to make Conference posters, T-shirts, books, and videos available in the online store.

Visit the Center’s website at www.olemiss.edu/depts/south.

Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters

The Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters (MIAL) will celebrate its 33 years of existence at a gala awards banquet at the Mississippi Museum of Art in Jackson, Mississippi, on June 9, 2012. David Beckley, President of Rust College, is the new president of MIAL, the only organization in the state that chooses its arts honorees in a juried competition.

Nominations for juried awards in the categories of visual arts, photography, fiction, nonfiction, poetry, music composition (classical), and music composition (contemporary) will be accepted from now until January 15, 2012. Works eligible for nomination must have been first published, performed, or publicly exhibited during the calendar year January–December 2011. Only members of MIAL may nominate artists for these awards. Members may nominate more than one individual in any category and may nominate in as many categories as they wish. One page of comments may be included in the nomination. Forms both for nominating artists and for joining MIAL are found below.

The MIAL awards honor living Mississippians who are either current residents of the state or former residents with continuing and significant ties to the state. All judges are from outside Mississippi. Past winners of these awards include Richard Ford, Barry Hannah, Natasha Trethewey, Walker Percy, and Gwendolyn Magee.

AWARD CATEGORIES:

VISUAL ARTS (painting, sculpture, drawing, print, graphic arts, etc.) Eligible are up to 15 pieces first publicly shown or published in 2011. Submit slides, prints, or published work.

PHOTOGRAPHY (color, black and white, combination) Eligible are up to 15 photographs first publicly shown or published in 2011. Submit CD, slides, prints, or published work.

FICTION (novel, short story collection, etc.) Eligible is work first published in 2011. Submit author's name, publisher, title of publication, and date of publication.

NONFICTION (any literature that is not fictional) Eligible is any work first published in 2011. Submit author's name, publisher, title of publication, and date of publication.

POETRY Eligible are up to 15 poems published individually for the first time in 2011 or a collection of at least 15 poems published in book form for the first time in 2011 (poems in the collection may have been first published earlier than 2011). Submit tear sheets or publication.

MUSIC COMPOSITION—CLASSICAL (song, opera, composition, instrumental music, etc.) This award is for works first published or performed publicly in 2011. Submit evidence of initial performance or publication (book, CD, tape) in 2011.

MUSIC COMPOSITION—CONTEMPORARY (blues, country, jazz, rock, etc.) Submit published scores or the commercial recording first released in 2011.

Deadline: Nominations must be postmarked on or before **January 15, 2012**. Attach the artist's representative work (slides, photographs, CD's, books, etc.) Please mail to the appropriate address according to the category entered.

MIAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

Remember that only MIAL members may nominate. To join MIAL and support the arts in Mississippi visit our website at www.ms-arts-letters.org or use the form below. (Dues July 1, 2011–June 30, 2012)

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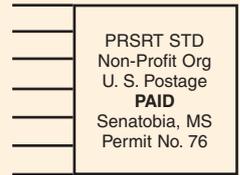
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Please make payments to MIAL and return to Jan Taylor, Treasurer, Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters, P.O. Box 2346, Jackson, MS 39225-2346. Contributions to MIAL are recognized by the IRS as tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



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