

the Southern Register

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOUTHERN CULTURE • FALL 2012

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

Southern Studies Welcomes New Graduate Students

On August 17, 13 strangers met at the 2012 Southern Studies graduate orientation in Barnard Observatory. In just six short weeks, the group has become acquainted through class discussions, dinners on the Oxford Square, and impromptu trips into rural Mississippi. Though we come from different places, we share a collective interest in the South, which we explore through our

own unique lenses. These individual perspectives draw from a variety of educational and professional backgrounds, and the group embodies the global reach of Southern culture.

✦ John Agricola was born in Gadsden, Alabama. He began his cultural studies journey at the University of Alabama, where he earned a BA in history and American studies. While complet-

ing an MA in American studies at the University of Wyoming, John worked for the Wyoming Humanities Council and the University of Wyoming Art Museum. John's thesis at UW explored the modernization of the Tennessee Valley Authority through murals of the Tennessee Valley, and he plans to expand his study of the TVA at the University of Mississippi.

✦ Born and raised in Dallas, Texas, Winston Booth completed a BA in history at the University of Texas at Austin. He then moved to Clarksdale, Mississippi, and taught history just across the state line in Arkansas. Winston's interest in regional politics led him to the University of Mississippi, where he will research politics and race in the South during the 1970s.

✦ Jodie Free joins the program from St. Albans, United Kingdom. She earned a degree in American studies and English literature at the University of East Anglia, in a program that included a year abroad at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Jodie's interest in the South stems from a deep appreciation of William Faulkner, and she confesses that she cannot stop writing about Faulkner or his work. In the future, Jodie hopes to earn a PhD and perfect the art of her second love, baking.

✦ In 2004 Turry Flucker departed a 10-year position as chief curator of the



David Wharton

The incoming class of Southern Studies graduate students are, left to right, front row: Kate Hudson, Jodie Free, Erin Scott; second row: Leslie Hassel, Renee Ombaba, Anna Hamilton; third row: Tyler Proffitt, Paige Prather; back row: Rachael Walker, Turry Flucker, Bob Xu, Winston Booth, John Agricola.

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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Of the three keywords in the title of our institution, the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, I find myself talking about the word “study” as much as the terms “southern” and “culture.” The latter terms attract most of the attention, and faculty, staff, and students at the CSSC have tried over the years to define both as broadly as possible. Events of the past month have dramatized the possibilities of thinking just as broadly about what it means to study.

The Opening the Closed Society program mixed academic analysis and documentation with other events, and it mixed moments of study with considerations of public memory about James Meredith, desegregation, massive resistance, and education. People in education, religion, the law, the military, and the activist community talked from their own experiences, two commemorative walks (one through campus, the other pushed indoors by rain) and the dedication of plaques and markers emphasized communal experience, and scholars offered detail and context. In one of the latter events, Grace Hale encouraged listeners step back and think about the importance of documentary work as part of—and commentary about—civil rights work. Southern Studies alum Caroline Herring gave a concert—the first of the Music of the South series at the Ford Center's Studio Theater—that included songs and discussion specific to the moment.

Two days after the final events of the Opening the Closed Society initiative, the Southern Foodways Symposium offered an inspired combination of analysis, documentation, discussions of many sorts, food events, and spectacle. Again, it encouraged creative connections between scholarship and things that were not scholarship. Documentary work and scholarly analysis shared the event with poetry, visual and dramatic arts, and “love letters” to individual barbecue restaurants.

Documentary films were crucial to both the Opening the Closed Society events and the Southern Foodways Symposium. As superior documentaries, the films by Media and Documentary Projects filmmakers Matthew Graves and Joe York were full of new knowledge that comes when people got to tell their own stories, and they were also visually compelling and full of surprises.

In the documentary films, in the Southern Foodways Symposium, and in the events of the Opening the Closed Society initiative, study was a crucial part of things, but it was only part of the story. I'll draw two conclusions. First, study should be open-ended. We don't know where it will lead, and we need the energy that comes from lots of people not just answering questions but also asking new questions and considering new ways to answer questions and tell stories. Sometimes people ask what interests me most about the South, and sometimes they seem surprised when I say it is the excitement that comes from studying it. Second, study can bring together ethics and aesthetics. While ethical questions involve doing scholarship right and considering why it matters, the aesthetics of good scholarship can take scholars almost anywhere. Our goal with ideas like the new MA documentary track, described on page 10, should not be for all of our students to want to be filmmakers or photographers or multimedia creators, although we want to help those who do. Our broader goal should be to continue the excitement that comes from rethinking what we study, how we study it, and the forms those studies might take.

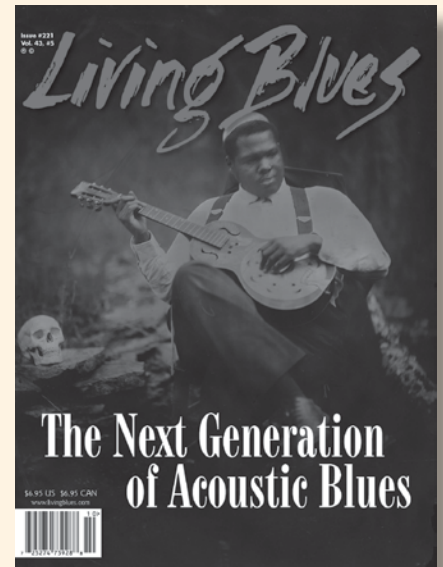
Living Blues News

The idea for this issue has been coming together for quite a while now. It started last year when Corey Harris turned me on to Jeff Scott, the Virginia acoustic bluesman and nephew of the great John Jackson. But what really made the idea take off was when photographer-writer Bill Steber turned me on to the young bluesman Jeron "Blind Boy" Paxton. Paxton is an amazing young musician who can play most anything with strings and play it exceedingly well. He is easily the most talented young acoustic bluesman to come along in many, many years. He is the closest thing to a living "prewar" bluesman I've heard since Alvin "Youngblood" Hart's first record came out in 1996. I was amazed to learn that these two musicians had no record deal and virtually no recordings. I began to wonder about this and dug a little deeper, finding nearly a dozen young (and not so young) acoustic bluesmen and women who also have scarce recordings. Following the success of bands like the Carolina Chocolate Drops, these acoustic players are finding an audience playing the oldest of blues styles and instruments. Banjos, saws, and kazoos are all once again

in vogue. So do yourself a favor—go on YouTube and check out the seven artists presented here to see what all the excitement is about. Then search out their scarce recordings, which we hope won't be scarce for long.

The tintype images produced by Bill Steber for this issue are printed in their original form—as reversed images. The optics of all ground-glass lenses render a scene upside down and backwards. Modern cameras correct for this by the use of mirrors or digital electronics, but cameras in the 19th century, when the wet-plate collodion process was in use, could only render a scene as the lens projected it. Hence all nonnegative images from the 19th century are backwards. In keeping with the integrity of the wet-plate collodion process, *Living Blues* has chosen to publish Steber's tintypes in their original form.

Next, I have a few *Living Blues* business items to mention. We are going to stop giving away the free sample of the digital edition on our website. But as a bonus to all our print subscribers, you can get the digital edition for free by signing up. Just send an e-mail to digital@livingblues.com and put "Free dig-



ital edition" in your subject line, and we'll get you set up at no extra charge!

And last, we have redesigned our Facebook page and shut down the old one. (We tried to migrate everyone but had only marginal success.) Our new Facebook page features photos, announcements, and special offers you won't get anywhere else. Please like us on Facebook and friend us on Twitter to keep up with the latest goings on at *Living Blues*.

Brett J. Bonner

Seeking Applications for McMullan Assistant Professor

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology and the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi invite applications for a tenure-track assistant professor position in sociology or anthropology with a joint appointment as James M. and Madeleine M. McMullan Assistant Professor in Southern Studies starting in Fall 2013. We seek a sociologist or anthropologist who has proven teaching and research ability in the areas of race and ethnicity, whose work has relevance for understanding the experiences of minority groups in the contemporary U.S. South, and who has experience with fieldwork or other qualitative methods. Possible areas of emphasis include but are not limited to music, visual arts, foodways, religion, sport, social movements, health dis-

parities, migrations, and globalization. The sociology and anthropology program and the Southern Studies program offer BA and MA degrees. While tenure and promotion reside in sociology and anthropology, teaching and service responsibilities will be divided between the Center for the Study of Southern Culture and the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Depending on experience and qualifications, candidates may have the opportunity to contribute to the university's growing African American studies program. PhD (or ABD status) is required at the time of application. Candidates should have an active program of scholarly research, an interdisciplinary perspective, and a strong commitment to excellence in the classroom. Interested candidates should apply online at www.jobs.olemiss.edu by

submitting their curriculum vitae, letter of interest setting out qualifications for a position in both Southern Studies and sociology or anthropology, one-page statement of teaching philosophy, evidence of teaching effectiveness, and outline of research program. Use the appropriate links to attach these materials to the online application. Three confidential letters of recommendation should be mailed to Dr. Jeffrey Jackson, Search Committee Chair, 205 Leavell Hall, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, The University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677. The position will be open until filled or until an adequate applicant pool is established. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. The University of Mississippi is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA employer.



Center for the Study of Southern Culture

The University of Mississippi

Brown Bag Lunch and Lecture Series

SPRING Semester 2013

The Brown Bag Luncheon Series takes place each Wednesday at noon in the Barnard Observatory Lecture Hall during the regular academic year.

JANUARY

- 30 "Who Belongs?: Becoming Tribal Members in the South"
Mikaëla Adams
Assistant Professor of History
University of Mississippi

FEBRUARY

- 6 "I Won't Be Reconstructed': Confederate Memory in Popular Culture"
Joseph Thompson
Southern Studies Graduate Student
- 13 "Ordinary Citizens': Sense of Place in Pre-Civil Rights Movement West Point, Mississippi"
Terry Jean Williams Buffington, Anthropologist
Oxford, Mississippi
- 20 "I Can See It All from Here': What Happens When Andrew Bird Comes South"
Mel Lasseter
Southern Studies Graduate Student
- 27 "Down Friendship: A Journey Home"
Chelsea Wright
Southern Studies Graduate Student

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.

Mark Your Calendars!

November 11, 2012

Piggy Bank Dinner
Atlanta, Georgia

November 15-18, 2012

Music to Your Mouth
Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina

November 13, 2012

Randall Bramblett
Music of the South Series
Gertrude Ford Center's Studio
Theatre

November 18, 2012

Helen's Bar-B-Q
Film Screening and Celebration
Brownsville, Tennessee

December 4 & 6, 2012

Pride & Joy film events
Hosted by Garden and Gun
Venues TBA
Brooklyn, New York, and
Atlanta, Georgia

January 10-13, 2013

Taste of the South
Blackberry Farm, Tennessee

February 21-23, 2013

38th Annual Porter L. Fortune Jr.
History Symposium

February 25, 2012

Tracie McMillan American Way
of Eating Lecture

February 28-March 3, 2013

Charleston Wine and Food Festival
Charleston, South Carolina

March 17-20, 2013

Mississippi Delta Cultural Tour

March 21-23, 2013

Oxford Conference for the Book

Native Ground: A Gammill Gallery Exhibition

The Center for the Study of Southern Culture is proud to host Rob McDonald and his exhibition of documentary photography during this fall semester. The exhibition, *Native Ground*, which explores the physical spaces that influenced the writing of numerous iconic Southern writers, currently hangs in the Gammill Gallery

in Barnard Observatory. At noon on November 14 McDonald will deliver a Brown Bag lecture in the Tupelo Room in Barnard Observatory. A reception will follow that afternoon.

In these photographs, I explore the role of place in shaping literary imagination: the notion that writers compose out of a peculiar understanding and depth of connection to physical space, remembered or immediate.

Personal interests have led me to focus on writers who have lived and worked in the Southern region of the United States. After all, if convention has it right, these are writers who bear something close to a genetic predisposition to produce a literature suffused with place. As Eudora Welty put it, "Of all the arts, [writing] is the one least likely to cut the cord that binds it to its source."

Using a primitive hand-held film camera for this series, I am making images that depict points of origin—meditating on personal spaces and landscapes in light of my familiarity with and curiosity about selected writers' works and biographies. These are particularly intimate photographs that propose narratives of connection in the development of vision and voice. In this regard, *Native Ground* is a kind of supreme fiction: my imagination of how physical spaces, lives lived, and art converge.

Rob McDonald
Lexington, Virginia



Whitman, Hillsborough, North Carolina
Home of Allan Gurganus



Crutches, Andalusia, Milledgeville, Georgia
Home of Flannery O'Connor



Intersection, Bacon County, Georgia
Childhood home of Harry Crews

Center Events Commemorate 50 Years of Integration at the University

The Center hosted a number of events as part of the yearlong Opening the Closed Society initiative in commemoration of James Meredith's 1962 integration of the University. A number of Southern Studies undergraduate and graduate students have a scholarly interest in the civil rights movement, so the variety of events staged in September and October provided a great opportunity for further thought on history and memory.

Brown Bag lectures this fall have been oriented toward the commemoration and African American history, beginning with a talk by Robby Luckett about the legacy of poet and educator Margaret Walker Alexander and the current work of Jackson State University's Margaret Walker Alexander National Research Center, which Luckett leads. Faulkner scholar Robert W. Hamblin of Southeast Missouri State University spoke about the 1965 Southern Literary Festival hosted by the University of Mississippi, at which a delegation of black scholars and students from Tougaloo were asked to leave despite the 1962 integration. Ellen Meacham's discussion of Robert F. Kennedy and the Freedom Riders concluded the series of Brown Bag lectures dedicated to a scholarly discussion of 1962.



Left to right, Ken Wooten, Lyman Aldrich, Ann Abadie, Gerald Walton, and Robert Herring speak about their memories of being on the University campus during the riot. Kathleen Wickham moderates.

Mark Dolan

One of the most well-attended events of the commemoration was a screening of *Rebels: James Meredith and the Integration of Ole Miss*, a new film by Matthew Graves and Andy Harper of Media and Documentary Projects (MDP). MDP also filmed and produced a short film about the legacies of integration, which included a number of interviews with UM students, administrators, and professors.

A few days before the 50th anniversary, the Center hosted an open panel discussion of people who were on campus during the riot. A panel of Ken Wooten, Lyman Aldrich, Ann Abadie, Gerald Walton, and Robert Herring began the discussion by sharing their memories, and then many in the audience spoke up about their experiences.

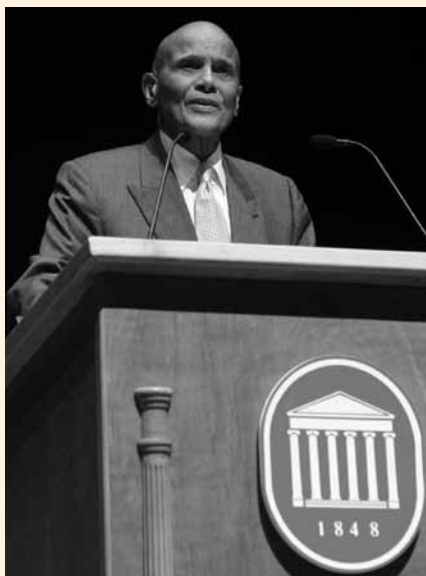
The keynote event for the University was a talk by civil rights veteran Harry Belafonte, preceded by a walk commemorating Meredith's first day of classes, beginning at Baxter Hall, his dorm, and then on to the Lyceum, and concluding at the Gertrude C. Ford Center for the Performing Arts.

Grace Elizabeth Hale's Gilder-Jordan Lecture "So the Whole World Can See': Documentary Photography in the Civil Rights Era" was part of the commemoration, which concluded in mid-October with two talks on the civil rights movement in Arkansas, with University of Arkansas-Little Rock Chancellor Joel E. Anderson sharing his experience on campus as a visitor during 1962, and history department faculty and graduate students talking about current trends in the until-now little-discussed Arkansas civil rights movement.



Nathan Latif/Ole Miss Communications

Chancellor Dan Jones leads a group during a campus walk that retraced the steps James Meredith took 50 years ago on his first day of enrollment at Ole Miss.



Kevin Bailey/Ole Miss Communications

Harry Belafonte delivers the Day of Remembrance keynote address on October 1, 2012, at the Gertrude C. Ford Center for the Performing Arts.

Becca Walton

Southern Studies on the Road

Conferences, book events, and planning events have kept Southern Studies faculty and staff on the road in the past few months.

At the end of the summer, four faculty and staff members met at the Decatur Book Festival, where Charles Wilson, John T. Edge, Jimmy Thomas, and Ted Ownby discussed *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* series along with fellow volume editor Larry Griffin. Edge was also on a panel discussing his book on truck food. In late October, Thomas and Wilson were on the road again, discussing the *New Encyclopedia* at the Louisiana Book Festival.

In September Kathryn McKee gave the plenary lecture, called “Beginnings and Now: An Argument for Studying the Nineteenth Century in the Twenty-First” at the ninth (and final) Southern Women Writers’ Conference at Berry College in Georgia. In October she presented “‘Hieronymus Pop and the Baby’: Sherwood Bonner and the Postbellum Anxieties of Region, Race, and Representation” at the Society for the Study of Southern Women Writers in Denver.

Late in the spring John T. Edge discussed his work at the Clinton School of Public Service in Little Rock. In October postdoctoral fellow Jill Cooley presented “The Salad Diaspora: Food Preparation and the Construction of a Transnational White Middle-Class Femininity” in Toronto at a conference entitled *Foodways: Diasporic Diners, Transnational Tables, and Culinary Connections*.

In the summer Jodi Skipper attended Culture Connection, a networking event designed to bring together people with interests in archaeology, arts, cultural development, and preservation with members of the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism. David Wharton showed some of his work at an exhibition entitled *Photographs from the American South* at Brick City Gallery of Missouri State University Department of Art and Design. Barbara Combs, while doing research on the civil rights marches in Selma, spoke about her research to



(Left to right) John T. Edge, Charles Reagan Wilson, Ted Ownby, Jimmy Thomas, and Larry Griffin discuss *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* at the Decatur Book Festival in Atlanta in September.



Right: (Left to right) Paige Prather, Kate Hudson, and Anna Hamilton at the Margaret Walker Alexander Research Center at Jackson State

groups of school children who participating in a museum summer program. Combs also received a Manuscripts and Rare Books Library Fellowship from Emory University to research editor Ralph McGill.

This summer Adam Gussow took breaks from scholarship to play gigs in Columbia, Missouri; Minneapolis (The Deep Blues Festival); Charlottesville, Virginia; Steelton and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Fairmont, West Virginia (The Johnnie Johnson Jazz & Blues Festival); and Boston. Media and Documentary Projects filmmakers were on the road, Matthew Graves to conduct interviews for his film on the desegregation of the university, Rex Jones to film a longtime rodeo clown,

and Andy Harper to take students to Jackson to work on a new film project.

At the Southern Historical Association meeting in Mobile, Michele Coffey is presenting a paper, “Battling the Sinners’ ‘Politicking on Government Time’: The Legal Challenge against the Commission on the Status of Women in South Carolina,” and Ownby will comment on papers at a session on hunting and Southern history. Wilson and McKee will take part in a roundtable discussion about the transnational and hemispheric turn in Southern Studies at the meeting of the American Studies Association in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Ted Ownby

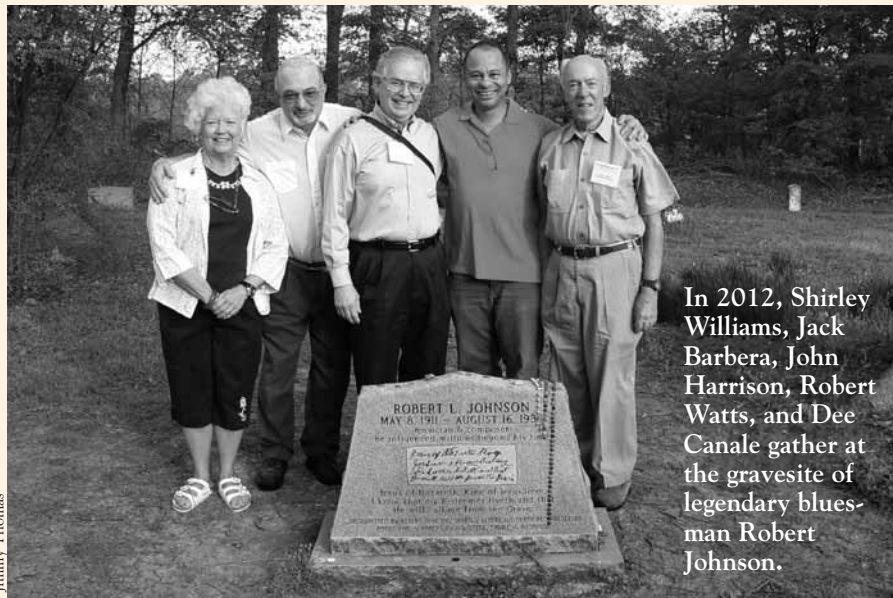
The 2013 Mississippi Delta Cultural Tour, March 17–20

Over the past eight years the Mississippi Delta Literary Tour, organized by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, has drastically expanded to include so much more than the literature of this richly captivating region—so much so that we’ve changed its name to the Mississippi Delta Cultural Tour to reflect the broad scope of inquiry and exploration that travelers on this four-day event can expect. We’ll, of course, continue to explore the region’s many writers and their work, but we’ll also talk and think about the food, music, history, and people of the Delta. Based in Greenwood, this year’s tour will include excursions to the towns of Greenville, Clarksdale, Indianola, Leland, Winterville, Money, Moorhead, Tutwiler, and Benoit.



Courtesy Amy C. Evans

Barbara Pope, Amy C. Evans, and Senator Willie Simmons at the unveiling ceremony of a Mississippi Blues Trail marker in Rosedale, Mississippi, on August 26, 2011. Evans will join the 2013 Delta Tour in Greenwood to talk about Delta hot tamale making and makers.



In 2012, Shirley Williams, Jack Barbera, John Harrison, Robert Watts, and Dee Canale gather at the gravesite of legendary bluesman Robert Johnson.

Jimmy Thomas

The 2013 Delta Tour (March 17–20) will begin at Turnrow Book Company in Greenwood with an overview discussion on the history of the Mississippi Delta, followed by a talk, “Thinking about William Faulkner’s Delta,” by Philip Gordon, the Frances Bell McCool Dissertation Fellow at the University of Mississippi. This will be the first time a talk focusing specifically on William Faulkner in the Delta has been given on this tour. We’ll also visit the historic Burrus House (completed in 1861) on Hollywood Plantation

in Benoit, where Tennessee Williams’s screenplay *Baby Doll* (1956) was filmed, and University of Mississippi film and literature scholar Jack Barbera will give a talk on the film and its fascinating connections to ethnicity in the Delta.

At the Museum of the Mississippi Delta in Greenwood we’ll visit the “War Comes to the Mississippi Delta” exhibition, which focuses on the Civil War’s Battle at Fort Pemberton (the sesquicentennial anniversary of which will happen in March 2103).

At Turnrow Book Company, Tom

McNamee, author of *The Man Who Changed the Way We Eat: Craig Claiborne and the American Food Renaissance*, will speak on Claiborne, who was from the Delta town of Sunflower and went on to become a cookbook author and food editor for the *New York Times*. Following McNamee’s talk, Southern Foodways Alliance oral historian Amy Evans will discuss her work documenting stories of the people who produce food in the Delta as well as the stories of places tied to the food Deltans eat. Evans will discuss in detail her efforts to document the work of various hot tamale makers and vendors around the Delta, and we’ll even sample some locally made hot tamales during her presentation.

The tour will visit Winterville Mounds State Park, which is the site of a prehistoric ceremonial center built by Native Americans of the Plaquemine culture—the Delta’s first known residents (AD 1000 to 1450). We’ll then hear a lecture by literary scholar Marion Barnwell



Jimmy Thomas

Above: On the 2010 Delta Tour, participants gather at the entrance of the B.S. Ricks Memorial Library, where they heard talks on Yazoo City writers by writer Gerry Helferich, on Willie Morris by JoAnne Prichard Morris, and on Henry Herschel Brickell by Teresa Nicholas.

Right: On the tour at Turnrow Book Company in 2008, Hillary Jordan reads from her new novel, *Mudbound*.



Jimmy Thomas

at the William Alexander Memorial Library in Greenville on author Walker Percy and his Greenville contemporaries and dine at the famous Doe's Eat Place, another historic Delta eatery that Amy Evans has documented for the Southern Foodways Alliance.

We'll attend a performance of scenes from Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Alice Walker in Clarksdale, and other excursions will include visits to the urban juke joint Club Ebony in Indianola, owned by blues legend B.B. King; various art galleries across the Delta; the Delta Blues Museum and Cathead Records and Folk Art in Clarksdale; and the Tutwiler Community Education Center. More stops are currently in the planning.

The Delta Tour is \$600 per person for all program activities, 11 meals, 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 \$175 a night plus tax, which includes a full Southern breakfast. Call 866-600-5201 and ask for the "Delta Tour" rate. Rooms are also available at the Greenwood Best Western, 662-455-5777, or the Hampton Inn, 662-455-7985.

Look for more information in the next issue of the *Southern Register*.

Information on the tour and on the places we'll visit, as well as dozens of photos of past tours, can be found on the tour's website, www.facebook.com/mdlt13. For up-to-the-minute information, please contact tour organizer Jimmy Thomas via e-mail at jgthomas@olemiss.edu or by telephone at 662-915-3374.

The 2013 Oxford Conference for the Book, March 21–23

This year we host the 20th Oxford Conference for the Book, gathering fiction and nonfiction writers, poets, journalists, scholars, and booklovers for three days of panels, readings, talks, book signings, and social events. The 2013 conference will open with a talk by W. Ralph Eubanks of the Library of Congress. Several sessions will explore writing and the university, with Chris Offutt moderating a panel of Alice Randall, Skip Horack, and Owen King discussing what it means to write in a university town and the effect of teaching on one's own creative writing. Former Grisham Writers in Residence Michael Knight, Shea Youngblood, and Brad Watson will discuss their time in Oxford. Area fifth and ninth graders will participate in programming on March 22.

Other planned events include a discussion of southern "grit lit" with Katie McKee as moderator and including Tom Franklin, Brian Carpenter, Ron Rash, and others. A panel about environmental literature moderated by Ann Fisher-Wirth will feature Laura-Gray Street, Juan Carlos Galeano, and Forrest Gander. Bill Dunlap will discuss curating books on visual arts with Estill Curtis Pennington and others, and Yale's Vladimir Alexandrov will talk about his book *The Black Russian*, the biography of a black Mississippian who came to fame as a jazz club owner in early 20th-century Moscow. John T. Edge will moderate a writer's conversation with chef Eddie Huang about his autobiography to be published in late winter. Square Books will present authors in sessions of readings, and we will hold a discussion of literacy in an increasingly multilingual South. Richard Howorth will moderate a panel on publishing.

An event for all interested local writers is in the works. Look for more details in the next issue of the *Southern Register* and on the conference's website, www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com.

Rising Interest in Documentary Studies Inspires New Opportunities and Projects

This fall the Southern Studies faculty took a new step to support documentary studies when it approved a documentary track for its MA program. The documentary track, which will go into effect soon, clarifies the way interested students can pursue documentary film or photography or audio or web-based projects as part of their MA work. The documentary track will join the thesis track and the internship track. This new effort to clarify the rules of documentary work coincides with other important developments in documentary work at the Center.

In the past few years several students submitted films as part of their MA theses, and a few completed photography projects or websites. The goal of the documentary track is to encourage such students by clarifying the process of doing documentary work as part of the MA. The documentary track requires that students take one class in documentary methods and one or both of two other classes in documentary photography and documentary filmmaking. It requires that the student complete a written thesis of at least 50 pages along with the documentary project. Documentary students will complete the rest of the program in the same way as other MA students.

This fall has been an exciting and especially productive time for documentary work in Southern Studies. The Center's David Wharton, who teaches the SST 533 class on documentary methods and the class on documentary photography, has a new book coming out this fall called *Small Town South*. Published by GFT Publishing, the book consists of 116 of Wharton's photographs from small towns throughout the South along with text about the places themselves. An exhibition of photographs from the book hung in the Center's Gammill Gallery this summer and early fall. Wharton and Southern Studies and anthropology assistant professor Jodi Skipper are planning a new project studying some Mardi Gras celebrations in rural Louisiana.

The new beginning of the new docu-



Photograph from David Wharton's new book, *Small Town South*, entitled *Sandersville, Georgia*, 2006. Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad (1897–1975) was born in Sandersville.

mentary track coincides with two new documentary films completed by the filmmakers of Media and Documentary Projects (MDP). On September 30 Matthew Graves and Andy Harper of MDP debuted *Rebels: James Meredith and the Integration of Ole Miss* at the Gertrude C. Ford Center for the Performing Arts as an important and well-attended part of the Opening the Closed Society: 50 Years of Integration at the University of Mississippi initiative. The film, based on interviews with James Meredith and numerous people involved with the legal, military, and educational issues of desegregating the university, showed the same weekend on Mississippi Public Broadcasting. On October 18, as part of the Southern Foodways Symposium, MDP filmmaker Joe York debuted his film *Pride & Joy*, an hour-long documentary that is an SFA film project. *Pride & Joy* screened in Oxford's Lyric Theater as part of a special episode of *Thacker Mountain Radio*.

York's film is one part of the documentary work of the Southern Foodways Alliance. A great part of that work consists of the roughly 800 oral histories Amy Evans and her colleagues

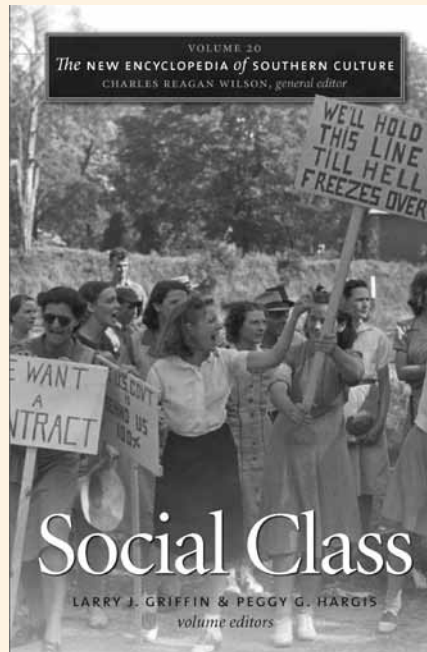
have completed. In preparation for the 2012 symposium on barbecue, a team of documentarians produced more than 100 new barbecue-related oral histories. One can read and hear interviews and see photographs from those projects on the SFA website, www.southernfoodways.org/documentary/oh/index.html. The SFA has helped teach documentary techniques in workshops Evans has led the past two summers, in internships of scholars who visit the Center for short stretches of documentary work, and in assignments foodways postdoctoral teaching fellow Angela Cooley includes in her classes.

The new documentary track for MA students and expanded documentary classes have the primary goal of involving even more students in documentary work. The new MA track, the increasing use of Southern Studies students in the documentary work of *Living Blues* magazine and other Center projects, and numerous student-run projects are all signs, according to Center faculty, of the importance of teaching more students proper methods for conducting interviews, making photographs and websites, creating audio projects, and

Newest Addition to *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* Focuses on Social Class Issues

In May the Center for the Study of Southern Culture and the University of North Carolina Press published *Social Class*, the 20th volume in *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* series. Volume editors Larry J. Griffin, professor of sociology and history and director of American studies at Georgia Southern University, and Peggy G. Hargis, professor of sociology at Georgia Southern University, have assembled a considerable body of work in *Social Class*, drawing on the efforts of contributors with diverse academic backgrounds and interests. With over 150 essays, the latest edition covers extensive sociological terrain, investigating the salient forces shaping networks of power and status in the South, as well as historical trends and cultural pastimes rooted in collective regional experiences.

Race has historically been a primary constitutive component of social patterns in the South and thus figures prominently in *Social Class*. The volume's introductory essays make clear that social class divisions in the South are often strikingly similar to historical conflicts based on race (exceptions are duly noted). Barriers to black social mobility are explored in the book, and essays on "Women, White, Working-Class," "Latino Workers," and "Black Elites and the Black Middle Class" further testify to the existence of identities in the South configured through the interface of race and class, as well as to the reality that class interests have shaped racial com-



munities in the region and continue to do so. Thus, while class remains the central organizing feature of the collection, its authors regularly employ intersectional analytic lenses to provide uniquely trenchant perspectives on Southern class identity.

Social Class likewise emphasizes the role of occupation and subsistence activity in organizing class affiliations. In particular, the volume explores the transition away from agrarianism and towards industrialization in the region, showing how this process has contributed significantly to manifestations of poverty and class consciousness in the 19th and

20th centuries. Additionally, discussions on Southern exceptionalism elucidate the region's longstanding aversion to Marxist and socialist movements. This tendency has often resulted in the rejection of unionism as a source of social empowerment. Consequently, entries such as "Antiunionism and Right-to-Work Laws" demonstrate how and why the South remains the "least organized region in country" in terms of labor.

As volume editor Larry Griffin noted in a recent interview, class inflections abound in articulations of selfhood for Southerners, informing their "opinions about equality and inequality; their sexual relations; their use of leisure time and recreation preferences; their attitudes toward war, foreign aid, abortion, and national priorities; their understandings of the proper role of women; their health; the regional stereotypes they hold; their family patterns and religious practices; their music tastes; their politics and volunteer activities; and much, much more." Exposing the class dimensions of such diverse Southern traditions as Mardi Gras, the KKK, NASCAR, honor, humor, and music, *Social Class* does much to describe the ways this structural axis imbues the distinctive lifeways associated with the region. In the process, it proves itself both an indispensable tool for academics researching the material culture or semiotics of the South and a singular addition to the encyclopedia.

Kathryn Radishofski

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making and editing films. In fact, according to Center director Ted Ownby, "It is possible to argue that some of these skills are part of a new form of literacy." In recent years, numerous students have shown their work at film festivals and taken jobs that involve documentary work, and the recent addition of the new Ann Abadie Prize in Documentary Media helps mark the importance such work has in Southern Studies teaching.

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 and on Twitter at @SouthernStudies.

Our 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.

Kitchen to Classroom: Eating Jim Crow

In the spring semester, the Center's postdoctoral fellow and foodways professor Angela Jill Cooley will teach a course that examines the relationship between food and race in the mid-20th-century American South. The course (SST 102 Honors, Eating Jim Crow: Food in the Civil Rights Movement) will be offered through the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College. Students will explore the segregation of public eating places, efforts to desegregate these spaces, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The course will be divided into two parts. During the first part of the semester, students will read primary source documents and engage in class discussions about how food was implicated in the civil rights movement, especially during sit-in demonstrations. They will examine the issues involved in segregated eating space, sit-in activism, and civil rights legislation. During the second part of the semester, students will engage in the practice of history by researching segregation and desegregation at public eating places in specific locations. Each student will use primary sources to complete a final paper that contributes to the historiography of civil rights.

In addition to learning and writing about this important period in Southern history, students will also contribute to the knowledge base of the Southern Foodways Alliance as it prepares programming for the 2014 symposium, which will mark the 50th anniversary of restaurant desegregation that resulted from the Civil Rights Act of 1964. A nuanced history of this period has yet to be written, but University of Mississippi honors students will help expand our collective knowledge of food and race in the South.

Major Gift from Atlanta Couple Helps Move UM toward Funding Foodways Professorship

Kristie and Charles Abney of Atlanta have made a major gift to the Southern Foodways Alliance (SFA), an institute of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, to help meet the goal of endowing a professorship in the growing academic study of foodways.

"We made the gift because we are passionate believers in the mission of the Southern Foodways Alliance," said Kristie Abney, senior vice president for the commercial real estate firm Transwestern. "The work that the SFA does to document, study, and celebrate the foodways of the South is of tremendous value, not only to the university but to all Southerners."

Charles Abney is a portfolio manager and director with ZWJ Investment Counsel. He also serves on the board of Atlanta's High Museum of Art, and Kristie Abney also chairs the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau's annual fundraising event, which supports the Atlanta Community Food Bank.

The Abneys' gift boosts the SFA to within \$140,000 of its \$500,000 goal for the professorship. Once that mark is achieved, a matching commitment from the College of Liberal Arts will help fund the professorship. Dean of Liberal Arts Glenn Hopkins said, "Having a foodways professorship will build on the Center's longstanding commitment to the highest standards of scholarship and the Southern Foodways Alliance's vision for training the next generation of foodways scholars. The College, the Center, and the SFA are committed to working together to establish a foodways professorship at the University of Mississippi, and we are deeply grateful for the Abneys' generous support of this position."

Ownby noted that academic interest in food studies has expanded in recent years and will continue to grow. "We can already see how foodways teaching can both fit into Southern Studies and go beyond what we have done before. In the fall of 2011, 20 students took the first Southern Studies 555 class (Foodways



Courtesy Charles and Kristie Abney

Charles and Kristie Abney of Atlanta

and Southern Culture) with postdoctoral fellow Angela Jill Cooley," he said. "Some of them are continuing topics from that class as part of their MA theses and other independent work."

"We imagine more students, whether in Southern Studies or other fields, coming to the university because of their interests in food and culture. We also expect a lot of students will develop interest in the field once they get here. This is developing at the perfect moment, since so many of today's students understand food as part of their own politics, raising all sorts of issues that are likely to keep changing in the future," Ownby said.

Individuals and organizations may make gifts to support the Foodways Professor Endowment by mailing a check with the fund noted to the University of Mississippi Foundation, P.O. Box 249, University, MS 38677; visiting www.um-foundation.com/makeagift; or contacting Nikki Neely, development officer for the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at 662-915-6678 or nneely@olemiss.edu.

Southern Foodways Alliance to Study Women in 2013

The Southern Foodways Alliance is excited to announce our programming theme for 2013. We will spend the year documenting, studying, and celebrating women in Southern food, with an emphasis on female culinary entrepreneurship.

Long hailed as home cooks, Southern women have traditionally received less recognition for their culinary pursuits in the public sphere. Oral history projects planned for 2013 will gather the stories of female food-business owners and home cooks from Jackson, Mississippi, to Richmond, Virginia.

SFA event programming will also highlight the efforts of women. At the Charleston Wine and Food Festival on March 2, Helen Turner of Helen's Bar-B-Q in Brownsville, Tennessee, will be crowned Queen of Pitmasters. Turner was the recipient of the SFA's 2012 Ruth Fertel Keeper of the Flame Award. The Charleston event will include a screening of *Helen's Bar-B-Q*, a documentary film made for the SFA by Joe York and coproduced by the Fertel Foundation.

In 2013 we will recast our annual summer field trip as the Summer Foodways Symposium. The Summer Symposium will take place in Richmond, Virginia, on June 20–22. We chose Richmond as the Summer Symposium destination for its rich tradition of female cooks, business owners, and civic leaders. From Mary Randolph, who ran an antebellum-era boarding house and authored the seminal cookbook *The Virginia Housewife*, to Chef Ida MaMusu, a Liberian immigrant who serves West African cuisine at her popular downtown café, Richmond women have left their mark on the city's foodways and shaped the broader trajectory of its history.

In September 2013 the SFA will team with the Sarah Isom Center for Women and Gender Studies to host "Women, Work, and Food," a symposium for graduate students. The planned keynote speaker, part of the Lucy Sumerville Howorth Series, is Kimberly Wallace-Sanders of Emory University, whose widely published work explores the image of the mammy figure in popular cul-

ture. Her talk, at Barnard Observatory, will be open to the university community as well as symposium attendees. To give graduate students a taste of the outputs of women working in food, a guest chef will serve one culturally contextualized meal to attendees. "Women, Work, and Food" will generate important conversations about social, cultural, and political issues that revolve around gender, food, economics, history, labor, race, sexuality, ethnicity, the marketplace, and identity construction in a transnational and regional context.

The year will culminate with the 16th Southern Foodways Symposium at the university, focusing on women in food. That event will take place on October 3–6.

Throughout 2013 original content on our website, www.southernfoodways.org, and our quarterly foodletter, *Gravy*, will pay special attention to women at the stove, behind the bar, in the fields, and in all other sectors of Southern foodways. We invite you to follow along with us.

S O U T H E R N F O O D W A Y S A L L I A N C E M E M B E R S H I P



Please make checks payable to the Southern Foodways Alliance and mail them to the Center for the Study of Southern Culture University, MS 38677.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, VISIT US AT OUR WEB SITE: www.southernfoodways.com or e-mail Julie Puckett at sfadesk@olemiss.edu

Southern Studies Alums in Foodways

Over the past few years, in part to answer the question of what people can do with a Southern Studies degree, the *Southern Register* has published stories about Southern Studies BA and MA alumni in teaching and scholarship, media and documentary work, music and the visual arts, the professions and other fields. Food-related fields have emerged as a popular pursuit, especially in recent years. Along with the several Southern Studies alumni who work for the Southern Foodways Alliance, a growing number of Southern Studies students have pursued careers in the food world—both making and serving food and teaching and writing about foodways. As the Center teaches more classes in foodways and attracts more students interested in the field, that number seems certain to increase.

Some alumni have found or developed positions no one knew existed. For example, Kate Medley (MA 2007), the food documentarian profiled in the following interview, helped define her own position. Since June 2011 Cale Nicholson (MA 2008) has been the garden program specialist for the Searcy County School District in Marshall, Arkansas, through the Delta Garden Study, a program of the Arkansas Children's Hospital Research Institute's Childhood Obesity

Prevention Research Program. The Delta Garden Study, funded by the USDA's Agriculture Research Service, is designed to prevent childhood obesity and improve academic achievement in middle school children. The program involves teaching middle school students about gardening and the range of subjects, especially science, one can study through gardening, and it puts some of the produce on the tables of school cafeterias. Weekly updates and pictures of the projects are available at www.arteengarden.com/marshall-high-school.

Stephanie Little (BA 2009) speaks for



Cale Nicholson

many who developed some of their interests in food through Southern Studies classes. "I grew up cooking with my grandmothers and my mom over the years. I've always had a love for food. It wasn't until one of my final Southern Studies classes that I realized I wanted to do more than just cook. It was in Dr. Wharton's class that I had this realization. Our assignment was to research a topic and discuss how it is distinctly Southern. He made me realize that the topic I should be researching was my family's recipes and our way of passing down recipes from generation to generation." Stephanie went from a position as a prep cook at Oxford's City Grocery to culinary school at Johnson and Wales University in Denver and then on to a program at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de la Pâtisserie in France. Now she is back in Oxford as assistant pastry chef at John Currence's group of restaurants.

Numerous friends in the food world have come through the Southern Studies program or taken Southern Studies classes. Those include Luke Heiskell of Woodson Ridge Farms and chefs Paige Osborne in Oxford, Kelly English in Memphis, Chip Reid in South Carolina, Rebekah Turshen in Nashville, and others.

Sawyer Riley (BA 2005) works at a Napa Valley winery, and LeAnne Gault has a media position with Viking Range in Greenwood. Georgeanna Chapman (MA 2008) is responsible for a traveling exhibition on Craig Claiborne, wrote a popular article entitled "Why Craig Claiborne Matters," and cowrote the introduction to *Craig Claiborne's Southern Cooking*.

The Center has worked with several alumni to host Center events. David Ferris (BA 1999) is executive chef at Babalu Taco and Tapas, where the Center had a Jackson, Mississippi, gathering of alumni and friends in May. And Bottletree Bakery, where Cynthia Gerlach (BA 1991, MA 1993) recently celebrated 15 years of food and folk art in Oxford, will host an event connected to the publication of the *Folk Art* volume of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* in the spring of 2013.



Stephanie Little with John Currence (left) and John Besh (right)

An Interview with Kate Medley, Multimedia Storyteller

As much as we enjoy boasting about our graduates, sometimes it's just as much fun to let others do the bragging for us. On September 18, 2012, Taylor Cocalis at Good Food Jobs, a website that connects serious food-interested folks to good jobs in various food industries, posted an interview with Kate Medley (MA 2007), one of our favorite documentary photographers. Good Food Jobs—and Taylor Cocalis—seems to covet Kate's job, for good reason, and we think you will too. Here's the interview.

We have the urge to sum up Kate's good food job in one word: dreamy. She's got the fairytale spin of having stuck her foot in the door of a large, influential company on the cusp of Michael Pollan's fame. She's got the creative job title of multimedia storyteller for Whole Foods Market and the inspiring day-to-day work of translating that company's mission statement into real people and products. But before your glasses get so steamed up with jealousy that you can't see your computer screen, remember that the grass is always greener. We all have a story to tell. Don't give up on telling yours.

When did you know that you wanted to work in food?

After working in the newspaper industry as a photojournalist, I returned to my home state of Mississippi to get a master's in Southern Studies at Ole Miss. It was during this time that I became involved with the Southern Foodways Alliance and was exposed for the first time to a creative pack of people who have dedicated their life's work to studying, documenting, and telling the stories of foodstuff. They inspired me to bridge my craft with my interests and focus my documentary pursuits on food and the culture surrounding food.

How did you get your current good food job?

As I was finishing grad school, I wrote a letter to Whole Foods. I had long admired their work and mission, and so I explained to them how my documentary skills could be useful in telling the stories of the food on their shelves. This was in 2007, when the country was newly absorbed in *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and engaged in a conversation about local



Kate Medley (MA 2007) finds adventure on the road in 2008 during a shoot at Long Hungry Creek Farm in Red Boiling Springs, Tennessee.

food sources. Whole Foods was already doing a great job of sourcing locally, but the marketing department was interested in getting the stories of these local producers in front of customers. So they hired me for one assignment. They sent me down to south Georgia to visit Will Harris's grass-fed cattle operation. And it was delicious! Following that project, Whole Foods hired me on for the rest of the summer and eventually full-time. My job is largely to bring the stories of our farmers into our stores.

What was the greatest obstacle you had to overcome in pursuing your good food job dream?

I grew up in Mississippi, a state whose economy relies heavily on agriculture, but I don't come from a farming background. So when I visit farms, I'm often relying on the farmer to give me a crash course in that particular crop or animal. There's a steep learning curve involved in just following the terminology and processes of a farm story. (Or learning about things like electric fences—talk about a painful lesson!) I also have to consider what customers want to know about the foods they're buying. That requires staying abreast of agricultural practices and food policy. What are the pressing issues of seafood sustainability, and what is this salmon fisherman off the coast of Scotland doing to minimize his environmental impact? Or what is this North Carolina hog farmer doing to address concerns of animal welfare in slaughter? The goal is to

understand these changing issues thoroughly enough to then be able to translate them to our customers in a meaningful way, helping to better inform their food purchasing decisions.

What can you identify as the greatest opportunities in food right now?

There is huge opportunity right now in educating our culture about the real costs and benefits of good food. Good food is rarely cheap. But the health toll that convenience food is taking on our society isn't cheap, either. In the South, where I live, there are many small communities without grocery stores or farmers markets. People shop for food at gas stations. I think this country is now more ready than ever to engage in this conversation of food access as an issue of public health. But there is an educational component to this conversation, an economic component, and a big food policy component.

If you could be compensated for your work with something other than money, what would it be?

Five years ago, I would have said TRAVEL. But now that my job is to travel, I'd love to have longer weekends at home to sit on my front porch swing with a good book!

We appreciate Good Foods Jobs for allowing us to reprint this. Go to www.goodfoodjobs.com/blog to see Kate's interview and others like it.

SFA Barbecue Blog Roundup

This year, the SFA website has hosted three guest bloggers, all experts on the subject of barbecue. Adrian Miller, a Colorado-based lawyer with Southern roots, is finishing a book on soul food to be published by UNC Press in 2013. Robert Moss of Charleston, South Carolina, is the food writer and restaurant critic for the *Charleston City Paper* and the author of *Barbecue: The History of an American Institution* (University of Alabama Press, 2010). Daniel Vaughn, an architect from Dallas, has visited more Texas barbecue joints than we knew existed. His book *Prophets of Smoked Meat*, with photos by Nicholas McWhirter, will be published by Ecco in 2013.

Here, we share with you one post from each of our barbecue scholars. For more, visit our blog at www.southern-foodways.blogspot.com.

Lone Star Dispatch: Barbacoa By Daniel Vaughn

A whole *cabeza de vaca* (cow head)—wrapped in *maguey* (agave) leaves and cooked in the ground—used to be the norm when discussing barbacoa in Texas. This image has quickly been overtaken by boxes of previously vacuum-packed beef cheeks steaming in an industrial kitchen. The resulting product is similar in name only to the traditional backyard meal.

In Cesar Coronado's small backyard in West Dallas, the old way of barbacoa is alive and well. On a recent evening, he demonstrated the method—passed down from his grandfather—to an intimate assembly of the barbecue faithful. Real barbacoa requires only wood, meat, maguey leaves, and a hole in the ground. Seasoning is applied only at the table. Cesar has turned a concrete drainage pipe on its side and buried it in his backyard. A few blocks away, his father's backyard boasts a similar setup, and my guess is that, one day, his son's will, too.

When we arrived at Cesar's house, the mesquite fire was already blazing. The goal, Cesar explained, is to cook it



Daniel Vaughn

down to just coals. Once the coals were ready, Cesar lined the hole with leaves and dropped in the head, along with assorted other cuts of beef. He folded the tops of the leaves over the head, and then covered the whole shebang with a metal lid and more dirt, to serve as insulation.

The next day, we watched as Cesar uncovered the hole. The meat was hot and ready to go, and we worked quickly to bring it to the table, where fresh tortillas, salsa, guacamole, and saltshakers were waiting. Smoking the meat gives it a drier, richer taste and texture than the steamed *cabeza* you'd get at a restaurant. And nothing compares to the experience of eating a taco filled with cheek meat, freshly pulled from the skull.

Our Nation's Wildest Barbecue By Adrian Miller

Perhaps the wildest barbecue in our nation's history was "The Last Buffalo Barbecue," held in Denver, Colorado, on January 27, 1898. A group of Denver's prominent citizens wanted the city to be the permanent home of the National Stock Growers Convention, where the biggest cattlemen gathered to buy, trade, and talk all things livestock. The concerned citizens seduced the

convention's organizers and VIPs with barbecue—a lot of it. On the gargantuan menu for the 20,000 expected guests were 2 buffalo, 10 cows, 4 elk, 30 sheep, 2 bears, 15 antelope, and 200 possums. For the vegetarians in the crowd (okay, there probably weren't many of those), side dishes included 35 barrels of yams, 10,000 pickles, 3,000 loaves of bread, a half-ton of cheese, 300 kegs of beer, and 200 gallons of coffee. Because of the great anticipation for the event—and the aroma that wafted all through town—50,000 people showed up for the barbecue. And they were all hungry.

Someone had the bright idea to serve the beer first, hoping to mollify the throng. A riot soon broke out, causing Colorado's governor and Denver's mayor to seek shelter. Many of the cooks were reduced to tears. With some hyperbole, the *Littleton Independent* editorialized, "It was probably the last time that buffalo meat, bears' meat, opossum, antelope steaks, and venison will be served in barbecue style on the American continent."

As far as we know, they were right until 1923, when Oklahoma governor Jack Walton's inauguration barbecue boasted a similar menu and drew 125,000 attendees.

Eugene Talmadge and the Art of Political Barbecue

By Robert Moss

In this era of televised debates and relentless campaign ads, the role of the barbecue in politics has faded somewhat. Into the mid-20th century, it was an important campaign weapon, especially for populist politicians in the South and West. Perhaps none used barbecue more effectively than Eugene Talmadge, who served three terms as governor of Georgia in the 1930s and 1940s.

At a time when Georgia's politics was dominated by "courthouse gangs" of powerful county officials, Talmadge gained power by going directly to the people—and he did so with barbecue. In 1932 he kicked off his first gubernatorial campaign with a massive rally in his hometown of McRae. Local farmers donated over 10,000 pounds of pigs and goats, and they were cooked over a shallow pit by Norman Graham, the "Barbecue King of Telfair County." After the feast, the crowd of 10,000 cheered wildly throughout Talmadge's speech, carrying him from the platform on their shoulders at the end. That kicked off a two-month campaign tour in which Talmadge staged similar barbecues in most of Georgia's rural counties. "We didn't carry any counties with streetcars running in them," he later noted, but he won the election handily.

During Talmadge's reelection bids, "The Tree-Climbing Haggards of Danielsville" became a regular part of the barbecues. The elder Haggard and his eight sons dressed like Gene Talmadge in black suits, wide-brimmed hats, and red suspenders. They climbed to the top of tall pine trees around the barbecue grove and shouted down scripted cues like, "Tell us about the schoolteachers, Gene!" and "Tell us about the old folks!"

One afternoon a Haggard boy ate a little too much barbecue at the previous campaign stop and dozed off up in his tree. He tumbled down through the pine branches to the ground, bringing Talmadge's speech to a crashing halt and demonstrating the perils of too much political barbecue.

continued from 1

New Students

Smith Robertson Museum in Jackson, Mississippi, in order to join the Louisiana Civil Rights Museum as division director and founding project director. A native of Houston, Texas, Turry studied history and African American studies at Tougaloo University, where he began a commitment to promote civic engagement and social responsibility.

✦ Anna Hamilton is a native of Saint Augustine, Florida. She graduated from New College in Florida with a degree in humanities. At New College, she developed passions for audio documentary work, storytelling, and foodways, and she hopes to connect these interests in her thesis at the University of Mississippi. Anna's Florida roots are evident, as she says Datil pepper sauce, Florida blueberries, and East Coast saltwater run thick in her blood.

✦ Leslie Hassel comes to Mississippi from the foothills of the Ozark Mountains in Arkansas. She earned a BA in English and media communications at the University of Arkansas—Fort Smith, where she served as the arts and entertainment editor for the *Lions Chronicle*. Leslie's interest in journalism led her to investigate print media's influence on public opinion during the civil rights movement, and she will expand this work at the University, focusing on regional media outlets in the South.

✦ Kate Hudson grew up in Durham, North Carolina. She completed a degree in media and cultural studies at the New School in New York City, focusing on documentary theory and oral history. Kate's interest in the South stems from her ancestral roots, but she gained a true desire to study the region while living in Berlin. Kate's academic pursuits emphasize community engagement and its influence in documentary work.

✦ Renee Ombaba is from Jackson, Mississippi, where she received a BA in vocal performance from Jackson State University. While there, Renee worked closely with the Student Government Association and held leadership positions in vocal and theater performance groups. She is currently the graduate student intern for the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation, where she has worked for six years. At the University of Mississippi, she will study African

American media. Renee has a great love for music and enjoys singing and playing the piano during her free time.

✦ Paige Prather is from Austin, Texas, where she earned a BA in anthropology at the University of Texas. She spent a year in New York City and lived most recently in Portland, Oregon. The music of Mississippi and the literary history of Oxford attracted Paige to the South. She is interested in documentary studies with an emphasis on advocacy and community engagement. Paige finds it difficult to pick one subject to document. She loves it all.

✦ Tyler Proffitt is from Marietta, Georgia, and he graduated in May 2012 from the University of Georgia with a degree in history. He plans to focus on religion and politics in the late 20th century while in the Southern Studies program. He is also interested in contemporary representations of the South in the media, Walker Percy, and Georgia football, and he enjoys taking nice long drives around the state of Mississippi.

✦ Erin Scott returns to the South after living in Chicago, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, Durham, and Savannah. She was born in Dallas, and this regional tie drew her to the Southern Studies program. After working as a radio producer and teacher, Erin looks forward to honing storytelling skills and getting knee deep in Southern culture. Erin hears in multitrack, and she lives for sound.

✦ Rachel Walker is from Exeter, located in southwest England, and she earned a BA in American and Canadian studies at the University of Birmingham in central England. She completed a one-year exchange at the University of Mississippi in 2011 and decided to return in order to complete a master's degree. Rachel hopes to work with digital and social media within the international charity sector.

✦ Bob Xu is here from Shanghai, where he earned a BA in English at Shanghai International Studies University. Bob worked as a salesman, English language teacher, and country music singer for five years before coming to Oxford. He is interested in the expressive culture of blue-collar white Southerners. Bob plans to pursue a PhD in history or anthropology.

Leslie Hassel and Paige Prather

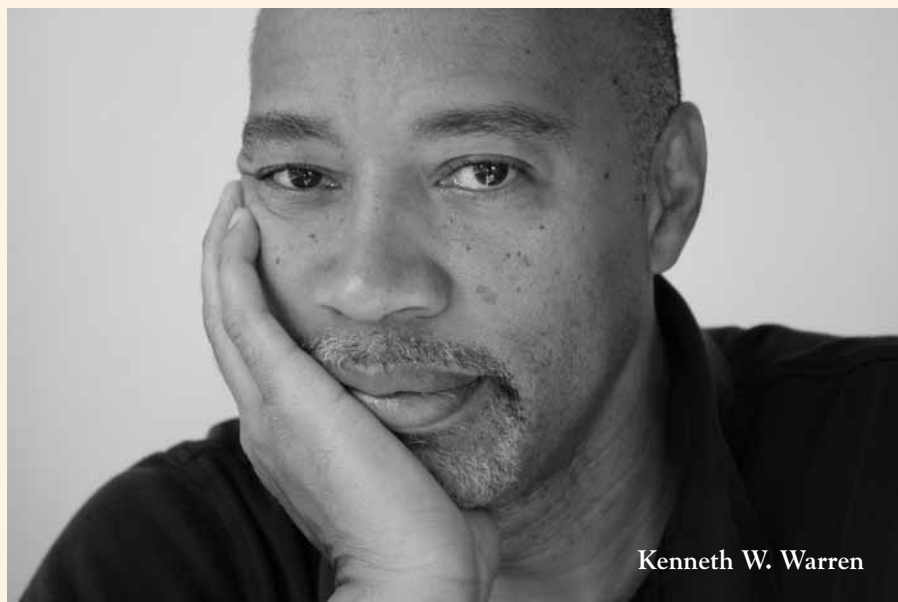
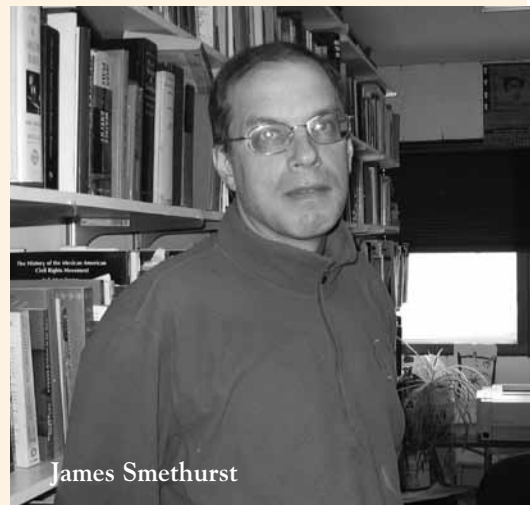
Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference: Faulkner and the Black Literature of the Americas, July 21–25, 2013

Scholars, teachers, students, and other lovers of William Faulkner's work will gather at the University of Mississippi for the 40th annual Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference, July 21–25, 2013. The conference theme, "Faulkner and the Black Literatures of the Americas," invites exploration of the cross-resonances and reciprocal dialogue between Faulkner's oeuvre and the diverse body of literature produced by black writers and intellectuals from the U.S., the Caribbean, and other zones of diasporic African creativity and intellectual production in the Western Hemisphere.

Three of the four keynote speakers for 2013 will be appearing at Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha for the first time. Kenneth W. Warren, Fairfax Cone Distinguished Service Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Chicago, is the author of *Black and White Strangers: Race and American Literary Realism*, *So Black and So Blue: Ralph Ellison and the Occasion of Criticism*, and the 2011 monograph, *What Was African American Literature?*, expanded from the 2007 W. E. B. Du Bois lectures at Harvard University. George Hutchinson, Newton C. Farr Professor of American Culture at Cornell



University, is author of *The Harlem Renaissance in Black and White* and *In Search of Nella Larsen: A Biography of the Color Line*. James Smethurst is a professor of Afro-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and author of *The New Red Negro: The Literary Left and American Poetry*, *The Black Arts Movement: Literary Nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s*, and, most recently, *The African American Roots of Modernism: From Reconstruction to the Harlem Renaissance*.



Returning to the conference as a keynote speaker is Thadious M. Davis, Geraldine R. Segal Professor of American Social Thought and professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania. An internationally recognized critic of African American literature as well as one of the leading Faulkner scholars of her generation, Davis is author of *Faulkner's "Negro": Art and the Southern Context*, *Nella Larsen: Novelist of the Harlem Renaissance*, *Games of Property: Law, Race, Gender, and Faulkner's "Go Down, Moses,"* and, most recently, *Southscapes: Geographies of Race, Region, and Literature*. Additional speakers and panelists will be selected early next year from the conference call for papers, which can be viewed at www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner/.

A special treat to be made available to conference registrants is a limited edition poetry chapbook compiled by two new members of the University of Mississippi creative writing faculty. Poets Chiyuma Elliott and Derrick A. Harriell seek to bring together poems inspired by Faulkner's life and work and authored by African American poets, along with other poems focused on the conference theme by writers of any background. The goal of the chapbook is to capture the range of responses that Faulkner has inspired, especially among writers of color: from praise ("I am in awe of the authority of Faulkner's Benjy," writes Toni Morrison), to condemnation ("We must destroy Faulkner, dick, jane, and other perpetrators of evil," asserts Haki R. Madhubuti). A special conference session will feature readings by a number of poets featured in the chapbook. For more information about the chapbook, including submission guidelines, contact Chiyuma Elliott (chiyuma@stanford.edu).

Other conference events will include sessions on "Teaching Faulkner," conducted by James Carothers, University of Kansas; Charles Peek, Emeritus, University of Nebraska at Kearney; Terrell Tebbets, Lyon College; and Theresa Towner, University of Texas, 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 the University Museum. 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 the legendary open mike evening, "Faulkner on the Fringe," at Southside Gallery on the Oxford town 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, director, at jwatson@olemiss.edu for details.

Jay Watson

Faulkner's World: The Photographs of Martin J. Dain A Traveling Exhibition

The photographs of Martin Dain provide a unique journey into the world of William Faulkner. Taken between 1961 and 1963, Dain's photographs portray Faulkner at home as well as provide a comprehensive look at the people and cultural traditions that inspired him. This collection provides an extraordinary window through which to view community history and from which to reflect on culture and change in Oxford and the surrounding area. As the exhibition discusses and interprets the legacy of William Faulkner, it also provides an opportunity to prompt community dialogue.

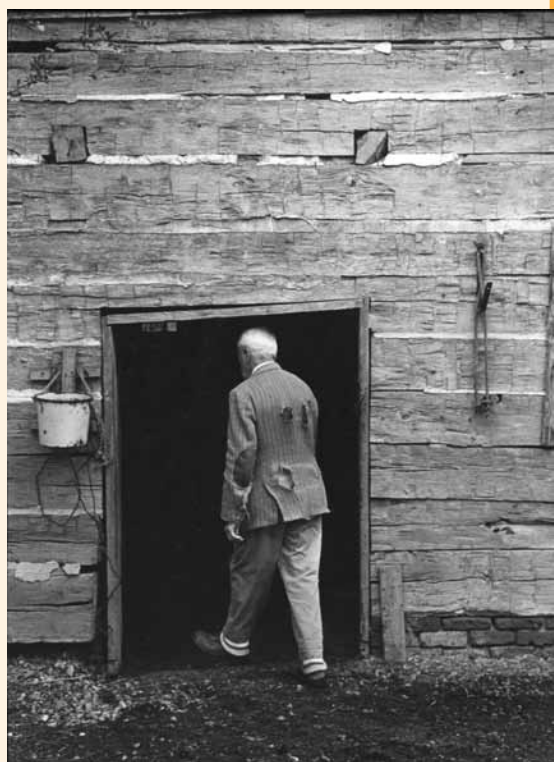
The exhibition opened at the University of Mississippi in 1997 and traveled for two years as part of the Faulkner Centennial Celebration, had an encore tour in 2007 in conjunction with the Mississippi Reads project administered through the Mississippi Library Commission, and is once again available, this time

for libraries, museums, and cultural centers in Mississippi and surrounding states. *Faulkner's World: The Photographs of Martin J. Dain* was curated and produced by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture. The exhibition has 36 16" x 20" black-and-white photographs and 4 text panels, presented in 24" by 30" frames.

A book of the Dain photographs, published by the Center and the University Press of Mississippi, is available with the exhibition. Oxford author Larry Brown wrote the foreword for the book. Tom Rankin, editor of the book and curator of the exhibition, wrote the introduction, which examines Dain's life and career as a photographer. Also included is the DVD "Are You Walkin' with Me?" *Sister Thea Bowman, William Faulkner, and African American Culture*, produced by Lisa N. Howorth.

Faulkner's World is scheduled for display in four sites in 2013: Natchez, Mississippi (January–February); Magee, Mississippi (March–April); Collierville, Tennessee (May–June); and Baton Rouge, Louisiana (November–December).

Persons interested in scheduling the traveling exhibition of Dain photographs should contact Mary Hartwell Howorth by e-mail (meh@olemiss.edu) or telephone (662-915-5993).



Martin Dain

UM Faulkner Scholar Receives Faculty Achievement Award

Jay Watson, Howry Chair of Faulkner Studies and director of the annual Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference, is the 2012 recipient of the Faculty Achievement Award. In 1985 the Burlington Northern Award was established to honor superior teaching faculty who were also active researchers. This award has now evolved into the Faculty Achievement Award, which

is given annually to recognize unusual effort in the classroom, involvement with students, active scholarship, and service to the university.

Since receiving his PhD from Harvard 23 years ago, Watson has been a significant contributor to the life of the English Department and the entire university. As a teacher, he has the reputation of being extremely challenging and highly effective.

Watson said one of the things that has always motivated him and made

him want to do well is the respect he has for his colleagues. "Being around such a dedicated group of teachers, scholars, and citizens is a big part of what makes Ole Miss such a rewarding place to work," Watson said. "So I'm humbled as well as honored to be recognized for my achievements as a faculty member. It's a tribute in part to all the great colleagues who continue to inspire me with their commitments, high standards, and sense of purpose."

In a nomination letter, one student wrote of Watson's major-author course on William Faulkner, "This is one of, if not the, best classes I have taken at Ole Miss. Dr. Watson has such passion, and it is contagious. If you want to understand Faulkner's imprint on the literary world, Oxford, and the South, take this course from Dr. Watson." Another nomination letter stated that Watson "is, by any standard, one of the smartest, most diligent, and productive teacher-scholars working the field of American literature and Southern Studies today."

Watson, a native of Athens, Georgia, who joined the English faculty in 1989, has also provided tireless service to the university, including his contributions on the Strategic Planning Council and the Faculty Senate. In the area of scholarship, Watson's achievements are remarkable, and he has established himself as an expert in Southern Studies and Faulkner studies.

His most recent book, *Reading for the Body: The Recalcitrant Materiality of Southern Literature, 1893–1985* (University of Georgia Press, August 2012) argues that Southern literary studies have been overidealized and dominated by intellectual history for too long. He calls for the field to be rematerialized and grounded in an awareness of the human body as the site where ideas, including ideas about the U.S. South itself, ultimately happen.

Rebecca Lauck Cleary

CONTRIBUTORS

Sara Camp Arnold is the publications editor for the Southern Foodways Alliance (SFA), which includes the editorship of *Gravy*, the SFA's quarterly food letter.

Jack Barbera is professor emeritus of English at the University of Mississippi. Among his scholarly publications are a coauthored biography of the English poet Stevie Smith; a guest-edited special issue of the journal *Twentieth Century Literature*, devoted to the work of South African playwright Athol Fugard; and numerous journal articles on drama, poetry, and film.

Brett J. Bonner is the editor of *Living Blues* magazine.

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 Cocalis is the creator of Good Food Jobs, a gastronomy-centric job search website, designed to lure others into the world of food.

Leslie Hassel earned a BA in English and media communications at the University of Arkansas–Fort Smith and is a first-year Southern Studies MA student.

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

Paige Prather is from Austin, Texas, where she earned a BA in anthropology at the University of Texas. She is a first-year Southern Studies MA student.

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

Edwin Smith is a communications specialist in the Office of Media and Public Relations at the University of Mississippi.

Mary Thompson is a farmer and retired high school teacher of English and creative writing from Clarksdale, Mississippi.

Becca Walton is the Center's associate director, projects. She received a MA in Southern Studies in 2008.

Jay Watson is a professor of English at the University of Mississippi. His publications include *Forensic Fictions: The Lawyer Figure in Faulkner, Faulkner and Whiteness*, and *Reading for the Body: The Recalcitrant Materiality of Southern Fiction, 1893–1985*.

Reading the South

My Friend Tom: The Poet-Playwright Tennessee Williams.

By William Jay Smith.

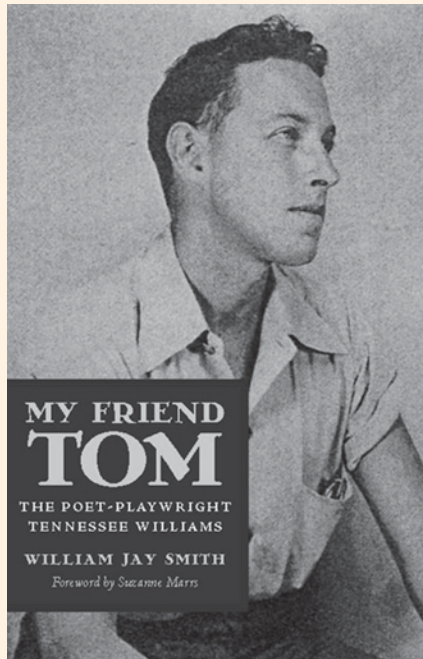
Foreword by Suzanne

Marrs. Jackson, Mississippi:

University Press of Mississippi, 2012. 173 pages. \$28.00 cloth.

Anyone who has attempted to write well knows the mental effort required. In an epigraph to his poem "The Tin Can," William Jay Smith explains that in Japan, when a writer goes off alone to concentrate, they say "He has gone into the tin can." In the end, the poem or story—or as in the case of Smith's memoir *My Friend Tom*—should seem to flow effortlessly. "If it does not seem a moment's thought," the great Irish poet William Butler Yeats wrote, "Our stitching and unstitching has been naught." Of help to Smith in putting together his memoir were the earlier writings he has stitched into the fabric of *My Friend Tom*—passages from his 1980 memoir, *Army Brat*, from a 1983 essay on Williams for a literary dictionary, and from his 2004 foreword to Williams's play *Candles to the Sun*. But a phrase in Smith's acknowledgments arrests me: he thanks his wife for attending to his health, "which the difficulties of advanced age have not made easy." So I marvel that at 94 Smith has had the mental energy to produce his astute and learned memoir, and to have it flow as if it were the conversation of an affable raconteur.

And what a raconteur! Into his narrative this sophisticated man of letters, who has translated poems from several languages and written volumes of children's poetry, as well as the kind that earned him the post of poet laureate, provides firsthand experience of Williams's mother, father,



sister, and brother, as he encountered them at Williams's house in St. Louis. He does not allow his appreciation of his friend's genius to inhibit, out of pity, his memories of those years when he and Williams were students at Washington University. Smith tells, for example, of the time Williams read to him and the friend who had introduced them, Clark Mills, one of his first attempts at verse drama, *Ishtar, a Babylonian Fantasy*. "He did not get very far," Smith reports, "before Clark and I exploded with laughter." Williams joined in, "astonished himself that he could have seriously set down such patent nonsense." On another occasion he and Williams found themselves in a French department production of a work by Molière. Williams enjoyed the experience and felt his acting made him "a full-fledged thespian," but Smith remembers being less enthusiastic. Williams "read his French lines with a kind of hound-dog ferocity and deliberation as if he

were chewing on a large section of the Mississippi Delta," Smith reports, and "he moved woodenly across the stage" giving "a performance that a more sophisticated audience would have taken as high camp." In another anecdote, Smith gives a less disastrous account of the audience reaction at the Boston premiere of Williams's play *Battle of Angels* than what is "now the historical version" provided by Williams himself. After the play, Smith had to console his apparently suicidal friend by reading to him for an hour and a half, at the playwright's request, the poetry of John Donne.

Often I've found myself bringing up Smith's book in conversations with others. Before I knew I would be reviewing it, for example, I read to a social-worker friend Williams's piercing poem about visiting patients in an asylum, "The Beanstalk Country," from Smith's chapter on Williams's play *Clothes for a Summer Hotel*. That play treats Zelda Fitzgerald's time in an asylum. She "clearly wants to have both the madness that she naturally possesses," Smith tells us, "and the madness of art that she thinks she merits more than her husband." But Smith draws an acute distinction between the madness of a disturbed mind and the *furor poeticus*—the madness of creation achieved only by long and disciplined hours of hard work. *Clothes for a Summer Hotel* reflects Williams's early visits to the asylum residence of his beloved lobotomized sister, Smith writes, and the playwright's own time in an asylum. My social-worker friend was so intrigued by Williams's poem and the passage from Smith's discussion of *Clothes* that I had read to him that he resolved to buy his own copy of *My Friend Tom*.

Smith's memoir is brought almost to the present when he offers his take

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

on the Japanese-inspired *Comédie-Française* production of *A Streetcar Named Desire* that he saw in early 2011. It was the first American play the *Comédie* had performed in its over 300-year history, and critics wrote vivid accounts. One noted that Stanley leers “with a wicked smile modeled after Heath Ledger’s Joker in *The Dark Night*.” Others pointed out that in the rape scene Stanley was accompanied by four *doppelgängers* in green wigs and purple pajamas, and that Mitch was portrayed as a heavily tattooed leather punk who entered and exited on a motorcycle. At play’s end, Blanche was taken to the asylum by five masked men who threw off black coats to become a jaunty blues band in white tuxedos. I recall, after reading these accounts, being dubious. So, in the spring of 2011, at the Tennessee Williams Scholars Conference in New Orleans, I was surprised to find a few attendees who had seen and were enthusiastic about the Paris production. Although I never got to see it, William Jay Smith’s response seems to me characteristically measured and acute. He judged it to be “a truly visual poem. In its Japanese metaphorical transformation, it evokes magnificently the mad antebellum dream of Blanche DuBois. But for all the admirable dramatic and visual attention to brutality and elegance, it has turned a simple lyrical text into a grand operatic one and, in so doing, has lost the direct poetic message that Tennessee Williams clearly intended.” This response echoes what Smith had found wrong in the London production of *Streetcar* many years before. He had left Italy to see it, expecting to respond as favorably as the New York audience had, and he was extremely disappointed. Smith quotes an essay by Kenneth Tynan to explain why: Tynan wrote, “the English and French productions were both so blatantly sensationalized that Williams’ underlying lyric fibre passed unnoticed.”

One of the pleasures of reading Smith’s memoir is his knack for

the out-of-the-way but succinct and apt quotation, whether it be the one just cited by Tynan, John Simon on the poetic quality of Williams’s *The Glass Menagerie*, Williams and Yukio Mishima on the mixture of brutality and elegance in Japanese and Southern American character, or the many lines from poetry by Williams, Smith himself, and others. A quotation I especially treasure is an insight by Eudora Welty. Smith includes in his memoir material he had related to Suzanne Marrs, for her 2005 biography of Welty, about Welty’s passionate love for the son of a prominent Delta family. One day, after a long and close relationship with him, she took the man she loved and a much younger friend of his to dinner and “realized for the first time that the two men were a couple.” When she came to write the program notes for a Jackson, Mississippi, production of Williams’s *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Welty spoke of Williams’s theme of mendacity: “Behind every play he’s written we seem to hear crying out a belief that as human beings we don’t go so far—no matter how far we do go—as to tell each other the truth.” Smith comments, “Eudora found that Tennessee Williams had imagined a character, Maggie, the Cat, who played on stage a role very similar to the one she had assumed in real life—that of a woman waiting in vain for the physical attention of the man she loved. When she reviewed the play . . . it was with the greatest appreciation and understanding.”

I’ll end this review with another apt quotation cited by Smith, this time by Walker Percy. Smith considers it the best summary of Williams’s achievement and one that is “completely unknown to the general public.” Percy wrote it in 1976 when Williams was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters: “Tragedians since Aeschylus have rescued meaning from not-meaning, sense from the senseless flux of time. To Tennessee Williams we owe a special debt. In a tragic age, he has trans-

formed loneliness by naming it for us, suffered sordidness with beauty, graced poor hurt lives with love and pity.” Smith concludes his memoir by saying that, to the special debt Percy says we owe to Williams, he has tried to bring his “record of understanding over many years as a witness.” We are in Smith’s debt for gracefully accomplishing his task, emerging at age 94 from long and disciplined hours of hard work in his tin can, and presenting us with a magnificently discerning and entertaining book.

Jack Barbera

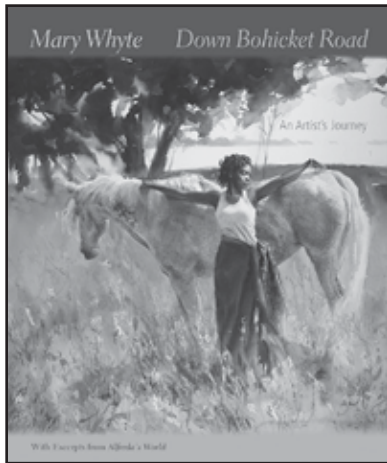
Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America.

By Gustavo Arellano. New York: Scribner, 2012. 320 pages. \$25.00 cloth.

In *Taco USA*, the Mexican American journalist Gustavo Arellano explores how Mexican fare—from chile con carne to frozen margaritas—has entered the U.S. mainstream. Arellano notes that, time and again, restaurateurs and entrepreneurs from north of the border have tasted immigrant fare, tweaked (or radically altered) its recipes to suit American palates, and figured out how to mass-produce it. This pattern has held true from the canned chili and tamales of the late 1800s to the hard-shell taco that Taco Bell popularized in the second half of the 20th century.

Arellano is the editor of the southern California alternative newspaper *OC Weekly*, author of the syndicated column *¡Ask a Mexican!*, and a lecturer in Chicano/a studies at California State University, Fullerton. *Taco USA* is thoughtfully researched and full of cultural and culinary history, yet written in an informal, humorous, even conversational tone. It’s a smart read, but it goes down as easy as queso dip.

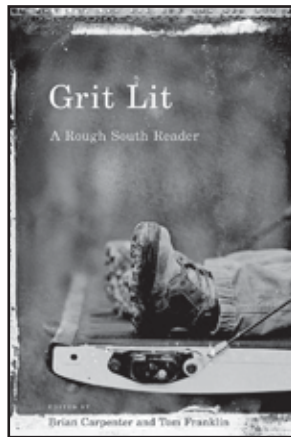
The book is organized more by cui-



Down Bohicket Road
An Artist's Journey
Mary Whyte
 With Excerpts from *Alfreda's World*
 Foreword by Angela D. Mack

"Through patience and persistence, the phenomenal paintings of Mary Whyte magnificently capture the Gullah living heritage and culture of rural life that perseveres among the sea islands and marshlands of the South Carolina lowcountry. Using her skills in the arts of listening, acceptance, and presence, Whyte shares customs and traditions of community, foodways, music, and spirituality that have survived and evolved for two centuries. Whyte's paintings are accompanied with exquisite, reverent narratives as powerful and timeless as the rows of ancient oaks that line and shelter Bohicket Road."—Jonathan Green

"The extraordinary work of Mary Whyte, who could easily be named the first visual poet laureate of South Carolina, is astonishing on the very face of it. When I grew up in Beaufort, South Carolina, Ruby Ellis Hryharrow, a friend's mother, was known as the best watercolorist in town. The artists of those early times formed a club of their own, but Mary Whyte's work is in a league of her own. She is painting a South Carolina I thought only a poet or novelist could create. Mary Whyte has made South Carolina a kingdom of her own, and my God, this woman can write and paint."—Pat Conroy



Grit Lit
A Rough South Reader
 Edited by Brian Carpenter and
 Tom Franklin

"Hats off to the editors and publisher who 'birthed' this amazing and needed anthology representing the best of a provocative subsegment of southern American literature. . . . There is lots of beer drinkin', fast drivin', and cussin' going on in these pieces by such rousing bright lights in the southern firmament as Dorothy Allison, Larry Brown, Barry Hannah, and William Gay. . . . The lifestyles and lives all of these authors write about may not be sweet, but the ring of quality throughout the book is certainly sweet to the ear."—Booklist (starred review)

"The whole world needs this book, its daring and direct stare, its treasures."—Clyde Edgerton

Contributors:
 Dorothy Allison • Will Allison • Pinckney Benedict
 Rick Bragg • Larry Brown • Harry Crews
 Tim Gautreaux • William Gay • Jim Grimsley
 Barry Hannah • Tim McLaurin • Robert Morgan
 Lewis Nordan • Chris Offutt • Ann Pancake
 Breece D'J Pancake • Dale Ray Phillips • Ron Rash
 George Singleton • Lee Smith • Alex Taylor
 Brad Watson • Daniel Woodrell



Still in Print
The Southern Novel Today
 Edited by Jan Nordby Gretlund

"Imaginatively conceived and well crafted, *Still in Print* is essential reading to understand contemporary writers' visions of the American South. Gretlund is a thoughtful and insightful guide to the relationship between earlier southern writers and those engaging the South's new social realities. The volume succeeds fully in its goals of leading readers to key texts and emphasizing the continuing significance of reading southern literature. Teachers of literature and southern studies will be grateful for the sheer usefulness of these essays that provide so much biographical and critical information."

—Charles Reagan Wilson

Featuring:
 M. Thomas Inge on *Cold Mountain*
 Clara Juncker on *Nowhere Else on Earth*
 Kathryn McKee on *On the Occasion of My Last Afternoon*
 Jan Nordby Gretlund on *So Far Back*
 Tara Powell on *Erasure*
 Tom Dasher on *The Oxygen Man*
 Jean Cash on *Fay*
 Carl Wieck on *The Good Brother*
 Owen W. Gilman Jr. on *Yonder Stands Your Orphan*
 Hans H. Skei on *Crusader's Cross*
 Charles Israel on *Work Shirts for Madmen*
 John Grammer on *The Bible Salesman*
 Scott Romine on *Heavenly Days*
 Edwin T. Arnold on *Enduring*
 Marcel Arbeit on *Lightning Song*
 Thomas Ærvold Bjerre on *One Foot in Eden*
 Robert H. Brinkmeyer Jr. on *The Lay of the Land*
 Richard Gray on *The Road*

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sine and specific food than by chronology. It covers not only the *gabacho*-fication (*gabacho* is used far more than *gringo* among Mexicans and Mexican Americans) of stalwarts like hot tamales and steak fajitas, but also explores the Mexican origins of vanilla and chocolate. The latter two flavors, Arellano explains, essentially left their original, indigenous Mexican producers in the dust (along with their innate complexity of taste) as they rose to global prominence over the past few centuries.

The author also steps back from time to time for a broader look at trends in Mexican American culinary syncretization. He writes about the nouveau Southwestern cuisine craze of the 1980s, the nebulous, hybrid behemoth that is Tex-Mex, and the national domination of the mission-style burrito via chains like Chipotle.

Though Arellano laments the lack of credit that Mexican immigrants have received for their contributions to the national palate, he's not a purist. Rather, he decries what he sees as the snobbery of fundamentalist *gabacho*-Mexican chefs such as the American Rick Bayless and the British expatriate Diana Kennedy. And Arellano is frank about his love for hybridized Mexican food, from L.A.'s trendy Korean burritos to bacon-wrapped, Sonoran-style

hotdogs from a working-class neighborhood in Tucson.

Throughout the book, Arellano is more curious about the underlying narratives of Mexican American food as he is about how the dishes taste, or what the "authentic" versions are supposed to be. Ultimately, his criteria for a great Mexican meal is also an apt description of the book itself: "Perfection doesn't exist, but a great story paired with a satisfying lunch? An eater's dream."

Sara Camp Arnold

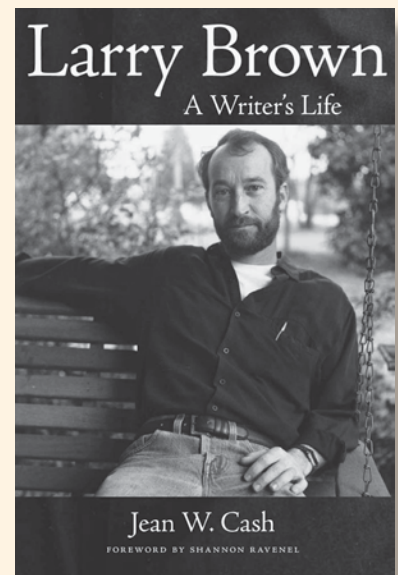
Larry Brown: A Writer's Life.

By Jean Cash. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2011. xiii + 302 pages. \$35.00 cloth.

Jean Cash has chosen her title carefully to reflect her approach in this first full-length biography of Mississippi writer Larry Brown. Readers seeking deep interpretive analyses or a comprehensive critical understanding of Brown's impressive body of work should perhaps be directed elsewhere, to Cash's own coedited collection, *Larry Brown and the Blue-Collar South*, for instance, or the growing body of literary scholarship on Brown published in academic journals. Here, as Cash's title promises, the writer's *life* stands front and center.

And that life is, first and foremost, that of a *writer*. Two of Cash's 15 chapters deal briskly and efficiently with Brown's ancestry and early years, up to the moment in October 1980 when the 29-year-old Brown, a husband, father, and firefighter, made the pivotal decision to take up writing as a serious vocation. "I didn't want to work with my back for the rest of my life," he later told an interviewer. However improbable it may have seemed given his hardscrabble background, he wanted a life of the mind.

At this point the writer's life com-



mences. Brown, I think, would approve of Cash's consistent emphasis on the *labor* of writing as a bedrock reality in her subject's life. Perhaps the most important wisdom that Brown, as a sometime teacher and mentor to young writers, had to offer those new to the craft was the lesson of his own apprentice years, a case study in discipline, perseverance, and self-belief. Cash's chapter on that apprenticeship may be the best in her book, a fascinating record of what Brown wrote—and where, when, and to whom he sent it—that charts not only dogged determination but a prodigious learning curve, as Brown rerouted his ambitions from formula fiction to high-brow literature. Even then, however, writing would become its own version of blue-collar work for Brown, a continuation of as much as an escape from the strenuous effort with which he had always met the struggle to support himself and his family.

And this brings us from the work to the *business* of writing, encompassing Brown's relationships with agents, editors, publishers, publicists, and readers. Cash is particularly informative—some might feel too informative—about this side of the writer's life, copiously citing book tour schedules, sales figures, and advance amounts. We learn as well how the series of publish-

er's advances and two-book contracts Brown worked out with Algonquin Books (publisher of all but one of his titles) created unrelenting pressure to produce under deadline, especially after his retirement from the Oxford Fire Department in 1990. Brown sometimes claimed to thrive under the gun—in a 1997 interview he boasted of writing better against deadlines—but Cash provides a candid picture of the stress and financial anxiety that were occupational hazards of the writing life. The account of Brown's decision to change publishers for his 2003 novel, *The Rabbit Factory*, offers an especially revealing behind-the-scenes look at how easily a writer's and publisher's objectives can clash in the fraught collaborative enterprise of making books.

One of the more enjoyable aspects of this biography is its attention to Brown's passion for the arts, one that went well beyond his obvious devotion to literature. His close relationship with painter Glenray Tutor, his "strong and genuine attraction to theater," his lifelong love of movies, and his deep interest in blues, country, and alternative music and musicians all clearly enriched his life and energized his work. Indeed, as Brown grew more assured as a writer, he experimented with film, stage, and musical collaborations that underscored his commitment to creative innovation and risk. In many cases, these artistic partnerships led to lasting friendships. One note sounded throughout Cash's book, in fact, is Brown's unconditional loyalty and generosity as a friend.

Cash's own authorial persona is plainspoken and self-effacing. Rather than pontificate extensively about Brown's work, she clearly prefers to let her subject speak for himself, liberally sampling his interviews, letters, public speeches, and occasional writings. (Another revelation that emerges from these pages is what a prolific correspondent Brown was, and what a splendid and indispensable collection his letters would make. Are you listening, University Press of Mississippi?) For the most part this strategy serves Cash well. For something about Brown's life seems to lend itself to straight talk, an epigrammatic way with words. I think of filmmaker Gary Hawkins, for example, who once summarized his acclaimed Brown documentary as the story "of a man who needed a family to get away from." Or of Brown's own terse account of his two-year hitch in the U.S. Marine Corps, which could have taken him down an entirely different path than the one he ultimately chose: "There was a life there, but I decided it wasn't the one I wanted." But perhaps Barry Hannah should have the last word on this writer's life. "You know," Hannah told a friend a few years after Brown unexpectedly passed away of a heart attack in 2004, "I think I wrote better when he was around." That's the ultimate tribute, from one master to another.

Jay Watson

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Foreword by Gene Roberts

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Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters

On June 9, 2012, the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters celebrated its 33rd annual awards banquet with winners Michael Kardos, Susan Haltom, T.R. Hummer, Shandy Phillips, Kate Campbell, Betty Press, and Rod Moorhead. Andrew Bucci and Samuel Gore received Lifetime Achievement awards.

Nominations for juried awards in the categories of visual arts, photography, fiction, nonfiction, poetry, music composition–concert, and music composition–popular will be accepted through January 15, 2013. Works eligible for nomination must be first published, performed, or publicly exhibited from January 1, 2012, through December 31, 2012, and nominations must be made by a member of MIAL. Members may nominate more than one individual in any category and may nominate in as many categories as they wish. Forms both for nominating and for joining MIAL may be 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 reside outside Mississippi. Past winners of these awards include Richard Ford, Wyatt Waters, Lewis Nordan, Eudora Welty, and current poet laureate of the United States, Natasha Trethewey.

At its fall board meeting, members of the MIAL board honored founding board member and guiding spirit, Noel Earl Polk, who died on August 21, 2012. In 1978 Polk proposed the founding of an organization dedicated to honoring Mississippi's writers and artists, and the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters was created. Serving on the board of MIAL from that time until his death, Polk functioned as the conscience of the board, holding it to high standards of excellence. The depth of his intellect and the breadth of his scholarship were matched by the sparkle of his wit and the kindness of his heart. He will be sorely missed and long remembered.

Mary Thompson

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.

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Mailing address: _____

E-mail address: _____

Check: I am RENEWING my membership I am a NEW MEMBER

Check appropriate membership category:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Student: \$15 | <input type="radio"/> Individual: \$35 | <input type="radio"/> Contributing: \$60 |
| <input type="radio"/> Sustaining: \$125 | <input type="radio"/> Institutional: \$150 | <input type="radio"/> Patron: \$1000 |

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.

Visual Arts
Nan Sanders
535 Hillcrest Circle
Cleveland, MS 38732

Photography
Robin Dietrick
401 Mallory Street
Clinton, MS 39056

Fiction
Scott Naugle
1302 East Second Street
Pass Christian, MS 39571

Nonfiction
James G. Thomas, Jr.
310 Dogwood Drive
Oxford, MS 38655

Poetry
Jenny Long
991 County Road 188
Greenwood, MS 38930

Music Composition—Concert
Nicholaus B. Cummins
318 Bolling Avenue
Cleveland, MS 38732

Music Composition—Popular
Mark Wiggs
917 Arlington Street
Jackson, MS 39202

AWARD CATEGORIES:

VISUAL ARTS (painting, sculpture, drawing, print, graphic arts, etc.) Eligible are up to 15 pieces first publicly shown or published in 2012. Submit CD, slides, prints, or published work.

PHOTOGRAPHY (color, black and white, combination) Eligible are up to 15 photographs first publicly shown or published in 2012. Submit CD, slides, prints, or published work.

FICTION (novel, short story collection, etc.) Eligible is work first published in 2012. Submit author's name, publisher, title of publication, and date of publication.

NONFICTION (any literature that is not fictional) Eligible is work first published in 2012. 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 2012 or a collection of at least 15 poems published in book form for the first time in 2012. (Poems in the collection may have been first published earlier than 2012). Submit tear sheets or publication.

**MUSIC COMPOSITION:
CONCERT** (song, opera, composition, instrumental music, etc.) This award is for works first published or performed publicly in 2012. Submit evidence of initial performance or publication (book, CD, tape, score) in 2012.

**MUSIC COMPOSITION:
POPULAR** (blues, country music, jazz, rock, etc.) Submit published scores or the commercial recording first released in 2012. (Songs in a collection may have been first published earlier than 2012.)

Deadline: Nominations must be post-marked on or before **January 15, 2013**. Attach the artist's representative work (CDs, books, photographs, scores, etc.). Please mail to the appropriate address according to the category entered or e-mail to ms.arts.letters@gmail.com.

MIAL Award Nominating Form—Please print clearly.

Name of MIAL member making nomination

Nominator's address

Telephone: Home Work

E-mail

Award Category Medium

Title of work

First shown/published/performed

Name of nominee

Nominee's address

Nominee's telephone: Home Work

E-mail

Nominee's date and place of birth



The University of Mississippi
Center for the Study of Southern Culture
University, MS 38677

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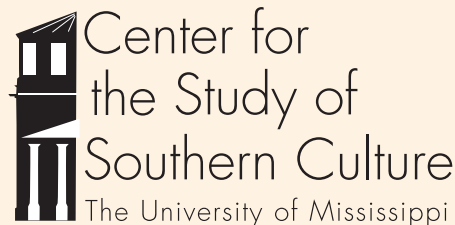
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