

Time Enough at Last

Charles Reagan Wilson Retires from Teaching to Focus on Writing Projects

Charles Reagan Wilson brought together everything from Hank Aaron to Zydeco as coeditor of the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, and now his final chapter at the University of Mississippi is complete. After 33 years as a history and Southern Studies professor, Wilson retires in May.

During his three decades at UM, Wilson has watched both the Center and the university grow. “When I came here the undergraduate program had just been established, so we had less than ten majors, and we were constantly having to justify the program with administrators,” Wilson says. “We didn’t have a master’s program until 1987, and we never anticipated the master’s program would grow that much. That has been one of the most dramatic changes since I’ve been here.”

In 1981 the university grounds were mostly dirt, gravel, and open space, with buildings in need of renovation. “Barnard Observatory was particularly fascinating because it was such an old building and it had such character, but it was in a Tennessee Williams state of decline,” Wilson says. “So you had that sense of a wonderful physical setting to study the South, and that was kind of the campus, too.”

Ann Abadie, associate director emeritus, says that Wilson made quite a name for himself during his time at UM. “He came to the University of Mississippi for an interview in early 1981 and, after visiting with him and hearing his lecture on religion in the South, Bill Ferris, Sue Hart, and I, along with many others affiliated with the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, knew that he would be the perfect director for our encyclopedia project,” Abadie says. “Charles accepted the challenge and in the fall began working on the encyclopedia, teaching courses in history and Southern Studies, and



Charles Reagan Wilson

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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

As the cover story describes, our friend, mentor, editor, and all-around positive influence Charles Reagan Wilson retires this semester after 33 years of good work at the University of Mississippi. I especially appreciate the open approach Charles Wilson shows to the interests and inclinations of students, to the subjects of Southern Studies, and to the range of scholarly approaches. Everybody matters, as do all topics, and people who have narrow definitions of the South and Southern Studies need to open their minds. As many of us honor, toast, and roast Charles, it might be intriguing to remember that in the late 1980s Charles Wilson received the Scalawag of the Month Award from a right-wing magazine whose editors were troubled by comments he made that symbols from the civil rights movement should be at least as central to Southern history as symbols of the Civil War.

The middle of this spring was one of those periods when Southern Studies faculty and staff were doing countless things that demonstrate the breadth and, we hope, the depth that comes from inspired academic work. In February and March Charles Wilson gave three public lectures, one on Fannie Lou Hamer and Elvis Presley, one on Southern thinking about the future of the region, and one a broad survey of interdisciplinary scholarship. At the same time, Southern Studies faculty members were giving public lectures on issues of space and segregation in the post-civil rights South, the concept of brotherhood, the 1980s blues movie *Crossroads*, and author Sherwood Bonner. Some were pursuing a project on rural Mardi Gras celebrations, one published a paper on Puerto Ricans and language in Orlando, one researched a project on the Depression, and documentarians completed a biography of former Governor William Winter and a short film on rural churches. Foodways scholars pursued multiple documentary projects, including an extended project on restaurant desegregation in Jackson, *Living Blues* published issue #230, two radio projects broadcast short sections from *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, and three Center conferences brought together dozens of people to discuss books, songwriting, and the present and future of scholarship on the South.

In the middle of all of this activity, some terrorists offered their own definition of the South. They put a noose around the neck of the James Meredith statue on campus and draped on the statue an old Georgia state flag that included the flag of the Confederacy. Combining violence, white privilege, and Confederate imagery, the act was offensive and damaging to everyone at the university and beyond it. In Southern Studies, it represented a challenge, among other things, to our perspectives that thinking about the South does not need to begin and end with the Confederacy and that our job is to study everybody and everything.

Since the terrorist act raised the possibility that some people are attracted to the University of Mississippi by symbols, language, and history that suggest this is an easy and comfortable place to claim privileges associated with ideas of white supremacy, it raised a possibility that someone, in the name of Southern Studies narrowly and university life more broadly, should tell them there are lots of hard-working people who disagree. So, in case any of those people read the *Southern Register*, and to further the goals of Southern Studies, and to honor the example of the old Scalawag of the Month Charles Wilson, I offer this short letter:

Dear Potential Terrorists,

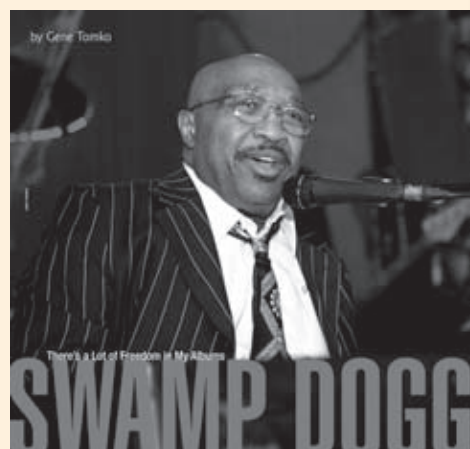
If you are thinking of coming to the University of Mississippi because you hope its symbols, appearance, organizations, or anything else mean the university is a place to enjoy white privileges you associate with Southern tradition, don't come. If you assume that a university that aggressively studies the South celebrates the Old South, you're wrong. If you come to the university hoping it is a place to relive privileges associated with powerful people in the antebellum South, you will likely be disappointed, frustrated, and angry. On the other hand, if you want to confront and help define important issues, to learn about yourself and other people, and to be part of discussions about multiple experiences, perspectives, and forms of expression, great. Please come join us, because those are among the things universities do best.

Ted Ownby

From the Pages of *Living Blues*

Living Blues issue #230 explores blues scenes across the United States in interviews with Swamp Dogg, Gregg A. Smith, Pee Wee Hayes, and Jarekus Singleton. Readers will also find a look at Lonnie Johnson's work in the 1920s, as well as the 2014 *Living Blues* Festival Guide.

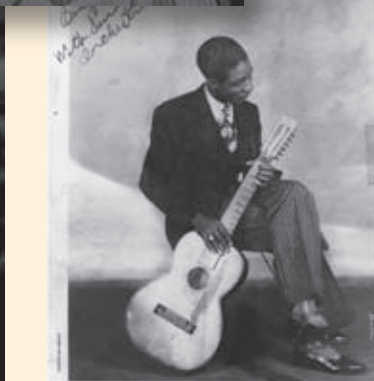
In this issue's cover story, Gene Tomko catches up with prolific songwriter and musician Jerry Williams Jr., known as Swamp Dogg to his fans. After working almost 60 years in the recording industry, Swamp's resume contains dozens of album releases and countless producing and songwriting credits. He



also runs his own record label and production company, called Swamp Dogg Entertainment Group.

Swamp left his native Virginia as a teenager in 1959, bound to pursue a music career in New York City. Once there, he began working as a recording artist and music producer, eventually becoming Atlantic Records' first black in-house producer. His experience as a producer proved invaluable to him as he began recording his own songs as Swamp Dogg. Under the pseudonym, he found more freedom to pursue sensitive topics, such as politics, racism, religion, and social injustices. Tomko's interview holds details on all this and more, including information about Swamp's latest album, *The White Man Made Me Do It*.

Dallas-based singer Gregg A. Smith talks to *LB* contributor Scott M. Bock in issue #230. Smith's emotional presentation and hard-working reputation



make him one of soul blues music's most powerful singers. As a child, he could be found singing in church or dancing to blues and early rock 'n' roll music in his mother's Texas café, and his vocal style reflects each of these influences. When he's not performing, Smith works to help other musicians in the Dallas area gain audience exposure. He hosts a regular public radio show that provides an outlet for local artists, and he also pens a newspaper column that features profiles of area musicians. Read more about Smith and his tireless dedication to the music that inspires him in Bock's interview.

Also in this issue, Steve Sharp catches up with Thomas "Pee Wee" Hayes. Hayes lends insight to the Midwest blues scene outside of the Chicago sphere, including his well-traveled gig route that spans across northern Illinois and Wisconsin. Hayes grew up in Tennessee, where his father, a blues

guitarist, played juke joints and house parties. When the family moved north to Illinois, Hayes began playing guitar and singing at picnics and other local events, and in the late 1950s he joined an ethnically diverse band that broke racial barriers in Wisconsin clubs as white business owners opened their stages to the band.

Living Blues contributor Jas Obrecht examines blues guitar work of the prewar era in an article on Lonnie Johnson in the 1920s. Growing up in New Orleans, Johnson was exposed to an abundance of musical styles, and those forms are heard in his unique style. Today, blues

aficionados recognize Johnson's innovative and recognizable delivery as an important development in blues guitar.

LB also sits down with Clinton, Mississippi's own Jarekus Singleton. One of Alligator Records' newest artists, Singleton brings a fresh perspective to the blues through an innovative lyrical style that grows from the artist's roots in blues, gospel, and rap music. His latest album, *Refuse to Lose*, is scheduled to release this May.

Issue #230 also contains this year's *Living Blues* Festival Guide, in which blues fans may find a detailed list of upcoming blues events across the globe.

Look for *LB* issue #230 on digital newsstands today or pick up a hard copy at your local retailer. You may also find *LB* on Facebook and Twitter for frequent updates on happenings in blues music.

Leslie Hassel



Graduation 2014, left to right, front row: Turry Flucker, Abby Abide, Paige Prather, Kate Hudson; second row: Anna Hamilton, Jodie Free, Leslie Hassel, Rachael Walker; third row: Neal McMillin; fourth row: Tyler Proffitt, Renee Ombaba, Bob Xu, Erin Scott, Daniel McKnight; not pictured: John Hermann

Southern Studies Students Win Awards, Take Bachelor and Master of Arts Degrees

2012–13 Awards

Abby Abide, Coterie Award for one of the best two papers by a Southern Studies undergraduate, “Big T-Shirts and Running Shorts: A Female Uniform and Southern Womanhood on the Ole Miss Campus”

Neal McMillin, Gray Award for one of the best two papers by a Southern Studies undergraduate, “Developing the Marine Energy Sector in Scotland: A View from the Islands”

Anna Hamilton, Ann Abadie Award for Documentary Media for her

Southern Studies MA thesis, “Bottling Hell: Myth-Making, Cultural Identity, and the Datil Pepper of St. Augustine, Florida”

Caroline Randall Williams, Peter Aschoff Award for the best paper on Southern music, “If Jocasta Sang the Blues: Motherlovers, Manbabies, and Blues-ed Family Values”

Lucille and Motee Daniels for best first-year paper in Southern Studies: (two papers) Amelia Brock, “What’s a *Southern Studies* Scholar? Wait... What’s a Scholar?” and Lauren Holt, “Love Him or Hate Him’: Tyler Perry Productions

and the Stereotypical Representation of African Americans”

Leslie Hassel, Lucille and Motee Daniels Southern Studies thesis award for her MA thesis, “Narrating Jackson State: Mississippi Media Coverage of the 1970s Shootings at Jackson State College”

Lindsey Reynolds is the recipient of the Julian and Kathryn Wiener Endowment to help support her work this summer in Charleston with *Garden and Gun*.

Enriching Southern Harmony

Feder Family Supports Music Development at University

The Center for the Study of Southern Culture is focused on expanding fundraising to create a full professorship for the study of Southern music. Among the first to support the Center's goal is the Feder family of Ocean Springs, Mississippi, pledging \$100,000 to establish the Music of the South Endowment. Ron and Becky Feder, along with their daughter, Elizabeth Feder-Hosey, and her husband, Matthew, are University of Mississippi alumni and strong believers in this growing area of emphasis. Having welcomed granddaughter, Evelyn Rose Hosey, to the family, the Feders are now two generations working to make the future at the university brighter for the third.

"We are extremely grateful for the Feders's commitment," said Nikki Neely, director of development for the College of Liberal Arts. "Their ongoing support energizes our efforts to fund a music professorship, an effort that is gaining momentum."

Serving as chairman of the Center's advisory committee, Ron Feder remembers having the first conversations about increasing resources dedicated to Southern music. "A time came when we realized that the South was losing lots of musicians. We recognized we needed oral histories, stories, and archives," said Feder. "We started with the blues but grew to include gospel, country, Appalachian hillbilly music, and more. The Center, with its faculty, students, and resources, is the natural place to headquarter the study of Southern music."

The Center has since created the Music of the South Conference and a concert series to supplement existing music-related programs and publications: *Living Blues* magazine, its Mississippi Public Broadcasting radio segment *Sounds of the South*, and the longtime *Highway 61 Radio* program. The inaugural Music of the South concert featured Southern Studies alumna Caroline Herring, known for her folk singing and songwriting.

Supporting the Center and attending its many symposia, conferences, and events has become a Feder family affair. Their support of the Center began over a decade ago with substantial contributions for the Oxford Conference for the Book, an annual event the Center cosponsors with Oxford's Square Books. "The Conference for the Book serves to highlight the South's established authors while also providing a platform for newer writers," said Ron Feder. "Books are the basis for all entertainment, in my opinion; they inspire musical works, movies, and other entertainment. The Conference for the Book encourages people to support good writing. It's like a pep rally for readers and writers."

Elizabeth Feder-Hosey practices law in Ocean Springs like her father and shares her parents' love for Southern art and music. She received a bachelor's degree from UM in art history in 2005 and later a Juris Doctor degree from its School of Law in 2009. "My parents introduced my brother and me to the



Courtesy Ron and Becky Feder

Family members Matthew Hosey, from left standing, and Ron M. Feder; Elizabeth Feder-Hosey, from left sitting, Evelyn Rose Hosey, and Becky Feder are involved in supporting the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi, with their latest \$100,000 gift designated for the Music of the South Endowment.

arts," she said. "I frequently raided their music collection, and they also took us to Jazz Fest in New Orleans and the Chunky Blues Festival in Chunky, Mississippi. I took some undergraduate classes in Southern Studies. Plus, I spent a lot of free time as a student embracing the Oxford music scene, so I love that the Center is taking on music as an area of emphasis."

In addition, Feder-Hosey recognizes the immeasurable effect and importance of a professorship. "I had professors who pushed me and made me uncomfortable, forcing me to be better at whatever I was doing. That's what good professors do. I would hope this professorship would serve that same purpose and introduce more of our students to the influence and impact of Southern music."

Like its other academic offerings in literature, art, and history, the Center's music classes and programming will be interdisciplinary in nature, and Center director Ted Ownby anticipates partnering with other campus entities,

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Common Ground: Houston Cofield Explores William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County through Photographs

Houston Cofield is a photographer from Memphis, Tennessee, currently living in Chicago. He received his BA in journalism from the University of Mississippi in 2012 and his MFA in photography from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2014. Houston is a photographer who also uses video, text, and objects to create fictional narratives. Family, myth, and history play important roles in the way he documents the land and the people he encounters. His exhibition, *Common Ground*, is on display in the Gammill Gallery in Barnard Observatory from April 16 to June 6.

Growing up in a family rooted five-generations deep in photographic history, I developed an appreciation for photography at an early age. Film photography was present throughout my life—hanging on walls and stacked between pages on our coffee tables. My grandfather and great-grandfather taught me to appreciate the art of making a photograph with a 4" x 5" camera through their published book of William Faulkner's portraits.

This history, fiction, literature, and photography continue to surround my own artistic practice. Studying photographers such as William Christenberry and Sally Mann and growing up down the street from William Eggleston served to reinforce my romanticized view of the South. Place, myth, folklore, and romance surround my work. They are qualities derived as a product of my upbringing in the American South and serve to further my own understanding of home.



Dirt, Tallahatchie River Bottoms, Mississippi, 2013



(above) *Carl's White Pontiac*, near Oxford, Mississippi, 2013



(left) *Chester*, Sardis Lake, Mississippi, 2013

tion of short stories based upon the land now covered by the lake. A portion of Faulkner's world was lost and is now resting 30 feet below the surface of a government-built dam. During the autumn and winter months the lake is drained for flood control, revealing the ground where Faulkner's fiction took place years ago.

Faulkner effectively blurred an actual history with an imagined one. Wandering through county roads bordering Sardis Lake I attempt to explore the interplay between these two histories. Using Faulkner's words as a guide, I seek to identify and evoke these histories as they exist today. In documenting the land and its inhabitants I am connecting myself with a photographic heritage while casting my own layer of fiction to this place.

Common Ground is an investigation into the land my grandfather and great-grandfather documented years ago at the north border of William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County near Sardis Lake. As I encounter the landscape, I seek to uncover the mystery and myth embedded in this region of northern Mississippi.

Prior to the flooding of Sardis Lake in 1940 Faulkner composed a collec-

Houston Cofield

The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture Recognized by the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters as Publication of Regional, National Importance

The Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters (MIAL) is honoring the Center for the Study of Southern Culture's 24-volume *New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* with a 2014 Special Achievement Award.

"It is fitting that *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* was chosen, as it is the seminal publication on everything MIAL recognizes through our award categories each year," says George Bassi, MIAL president and director of the Lauren Rogers Museum of Art in Laurel. "*The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* richly deserves this statewide acknowledgement for a publication of not only regional but national importance."

Since 1978, MIAL has aimed to determine the elite in fiction, nonfiction, visual art, musical composition, photography, and poetry. These works are all published, exhibited, or presented in the previous year, and out-of-state judges decide the winners in each category. The MIAL Special Achievement Award is given from time to time to distinguish something monumental in the arts and letters for the state, and this year's Special Achievement Award is only the fifth one awarded in the organization's 34-year history.

"The original *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* was such a groundbreaking success that it would be untruthful to say that I didn't feel the pressure, not to mention the responsibility to have this *New Encyclopedia* series live up to that standard," Center associate director for publications and *New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* managing editor Jimmy Thomas says. "I'm beyond pleased that it is being considered a worthy successor to the original volume."

Coeditors Charles Reagan Wilson



and William Ferris also received the MIAL Special Achievement Award in 1990 when the original *Encyclopedia* was published. "As series editor of this *New Encyclopedia*, Charles Reagan Wilson possessed a keen vision that made this series representative of the breadth and scope of centuries' worth of Southern culture," says Thomas.

Of course, the encyclopedia's success is not the result of just those at the Center. Many people, including Center faculty, staff, alumni, and friends, played a role. "While the Center is the institution that is receiving this award, the project really was a collaborative effort," Thomas says. "We had so many dedicated volume editors and scholars working on this project every day for around ten years. Some of the best minds in the South offered their

knowledge and effort to make this series a touchstone of Southern Studies scholarship."

Series editor Charles Reagan Wilson, managing editor Jimmy Thomas, and associate editor Ann Abadie, in conjunction with 32 volume editors and 1,500 contributors, have produced a thoroughly revised and updated edition of the original *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, which was published by the Center in 1989. The new edition, published by the University of North Carolina Press, paints in its 24 volumes a detailed picture of the cultural milieu of the American South.

Other MIAL award winners include:

Poetry—University of Mississippi assistant professor of English Derrick Harriell, *Ropes*

Fiction—University of Mississippi John and Renee Grisham Writer in Residence 1999–2000 Steve Yarbrough, *The Realm of Last Chances*

Nonfiction—University of Mississippi John and Renee Grisham Writer in Residence 2010–2011 Jesmyn Ward, *Men We Reaped: A Memoir*

Music Composition (Classical)—Quincy C. Hilliard, *Kojiki*

Music Composition (Popular)—Claire Holley, *Powdercoat*

Photography—Milly West, *Cuba for Keeps*

Visual Arts—JJ Foley, *Altering the View*

Noel Polk Lifetime Achievement Award—William N. Beckwith

The awards banquet takes place on June 7 in Jackson. Visit MIAL online, at www.ms-arts-letters.org, for information on how to attend.

Rebecca Lauck Cleary

University Hires Catarina Passidomo as Assistant Professor to Teach Foodways

The University of Mississippi has hired Catarina Passidomo to join the faculty with a joint appointment in Southern Studies and sociology and anthropology. Beginning in the fall semester of 2014, Passidomo—who will claim an office in Barnard Observatory—will teach foodways courses to undergraduate and graduate students.

In 2013 the Southern Foodways Alliance (SFA), an institute of the Center for the Study of the Southern Culture, along with the College of Liberal Arts, endowed a professorship in the growing academic study of foodways. Generous gifts from individuals and foundations augmented the endowment. “The University of Mississippi’s academic environment is greatly enriched when we are able to offer classes and faculty members representing new fields of study,” said Glenn Hopkins, dean of liberal arts. “The study of foodways provides another important facet for our students to explore in understanding the world around them.”

Passidomo is the first University of Mississippi faculty member hired specifically to teach foodways classes. She holds a BA in sociology and anthropology from Washington and Lee University, an MA in ecological and environmental anthropology from the University of Georgia, and a PhD in geography, also from the University of Georgia. Her dissertation examines organizations that worked to build community food sovereignty in post-Katrina New Orleans.



Photo courtesy: Catarina Passidomo

Catarina Passidomo

Since 2010 Passidomo has been an instructor of human geography and the geography of food at the University of Georgia. In 2013 she received the University of Georgia’s Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award.

“We are very excited that Dr. Passidomo will be joining our department in the fall,” said Kirsten Dellinger, chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. “She brings an important and unique perspective to the department as a cultural geographer. Her interests in space, food, and engaged community research complement the work of many of the anthropologists and sociologists in our department in ways that have already sparked talk of synergistic collabora-

tions in the future. The Department of Sociology and Anthropology has benefited from a strong relationship with Southern Studies for many years and looks forward to supporting Catarina and exploring new ways of connecting with the work of the Southern Foodways Alliance.”

In addition to holding joint appointments in sociology and anthropology and Southern Studies, Passidomo will work closely with the Southern Foodways Alliance. “Since its inception in 1999, the SFA has pioneered documentary and public programming approaches to the field of foodways,” said John T. Edge, director of the SFA. “With this hire, we aim to serve the next generation of students, excited by the prospects of foodways studies.”

“I am thrilled and honored to be joining the University of Mississippi and the Southern Foodways Alliance,” said Passidomo. “It is an exciting and dynamic time to both study and engage with issues of food and society, and I am eager to work with the many creative and thoughtful individuals pursuing this work in the university and throughout the region.”

Center director Ted Ownby noted that Passidomo’s areas of research and engagement will be of interest to many students, especially those in the Southern Studies graduate program. Ownby said, “As a cultural geographer, she brings a set of academic skills that will be new and welcome here. As a scholar who studies issues of foodways and justice in both New Orleans and Georgia, she brings insights into a good range of experiences. She should be immediately skillful in Southern Studies 555 (Foodways and Southern Culture), in other Southern Studies classes, and in helping students think through their research projects. She’ll be the ideal scholar to work with both the programs of the Southern Foodways Alliance and the classes in Southern Studies.”

Sara Camp Arnold

Celebrate Charles Reagan Wilson’s Teaching Legacy and Support Students

In honor of Charles Reagan Wilson’s long career in supporting and guiding students, we have created the Charles Reagan Wilson Graduate Student Support Fund, which will provide financial support for graduate students engaged in research in Southern history. Students from both the Department of History and the Center for the Study of Southern Culture’s Southern Studies program will benefit from these funds.

Please consider a gift honoring Dr. Wilson. Every amount helps. Gifts may be mailed to the UM Foundation, P.O. Box 249, University, MS 38677, or donate online by visiting southernstudies.olemiss.edu/friends, follow the link, and choose “Charles Reagan Wilson Graduate Support Fund.”

Fred McDowell Subject of Latest SouthDocs Film

The life of Mississippi hill country bluesman Mississippi Fred McDowell (1904–72) is the subject of a documentary film being made by Scott Barretta and Joe York. The idea for the film came about when the two discovered that the University of Mississippi owned a short film about McDowell called *Bluesmaker*, which was made in his longtime home of Como by Christian Garrison, who was a filmmaker for the university.

Barretta and York were interested in the Como community, and in particular Hunter's Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, where McDowell was a member. "McDowell made recordings with other members, including his wife," says Barretta, UM sociology and anthropology instructor. "Otha Turner, the patriarch of the fife-and-drum tradition in the hill country, was also a member, and the current preacher, Reverend John Wilkins, is a gospel bluesman whose father was the blues recording pioneer Robert Wilkins. Joe and I explored these topics in a *Highway 61 Radio* show a couple years ago, and Joe filmed Wilkins and some other local artists at a North Mississippi Hill Country Picnic."

McDowell's story is a fascinating one. He was a laborer who played local house parties, and for most of his life he was relatively unknown. In 1959 Alan Lomax and his assistant Shirley Collins made his first recordings, and shortly after the recordings were released, McDowell went out on the festival and coffeehouse circuit. Later he traveled several times to Europe, and he was a major inspiration to younger artists, including Bonnie Raitt and the Rolling Stones, who covered his song "You Gotta Move." He has also been a major influence on guitarists who play in the bottleneck slide style.

"That's the general arc of our story—from obscurity to international influence, and we're trying to capture as many parts of it as possible," Barretta says. "Earlier this year we traveled to England, where our interviewees included Shirley



Scott Barretta (left) and Joe York with Shirley Collins in Lewes, England, UK. Collins accompanied Alan Lomax on his 1959 trip through the South, during which the duo made the first-ever recording of Fred McDowell.

Collins, now 79, who had wonderful recollections of McDowell's 'discovery.'"

Other interviewees so far include Dick Waterman, who managed McDowell, and Wolf Stephenson, who booked McDowell at "tea dances" on the UM campus when Stephenson was the social chairman of Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity. He later recorded McDowell's classic *I Do Not Play No Rock 'n' Roll* album at the Malaco studios in Jackson.

York, senior producer at the Southern Documentary Project (SouthDocs), has served as the producer of *Highway 61 Radio*, Barretta's radio show, for almost a decade, and they worked together on another film some years ago, *Smoke and Ears*, about the Big Apple Inn on Jackson's Farish Street.

"We've both always been drawn to Fred's music and his remarkable story, from his chance encounter with Alan Lomax that launched his recording career, through his influence on the Rolling Stones and Bonnie Raitt, to name a few, and his lasting impact on the culture and music of Mississippi," York says. "We've traveled as far as San Francisco and London and parts in be-

tween recording interviews for the film, and we couldn't be happier with how well it's coming along."

Given the SouthDocs commitment to tell stories about the region through food, literature, and, in this case, music, it was finally the right time to make the film, York says. The biggest obstacle now is raising money to pay for the film clips and sound recordings of McDowell. "We've discovered some film clips that are not even known to blues aficionados, and they don't come cheap," Barretta says. "I expect that we'll be finished with the interview process by the end of this year, so hopefully the film can come out sometime next year." Anyone interested in learning more about supporting this film can contact Nikki Neely, nneely@olemiss.edu.

Barretta recently received a fellowship award from the Gerald E. and Corrine L. Parsons Fund for Ethnography at the Library of Congress to conduct research there on McDowell.

Rebecca Lauck Cleary

The Oxford Conference for the Book Awarded a Public Humanities Award by Mississippi Humanities Council

On Friday, February 28, 2014, in a public ceremony and banquet at the Hilton Hotel in Jackson, the Mississippi Humanities Council honored recipients of its 2014 Public Humanities Awards, which recognize outstanding contributions by Mississippians to the study and understanding of the humanities. The Center for the Study of Southern Culture was among those honored. The Center received the Humanities Partner Award for the annual Oxford Conference for the Book. The Public Humanities Award recognizes an individual or an organization that has collaborated with the Mississippi Humanities Council to pro-



vide programs, allowing the council to broaden its scope and audiences.

“Each year we hope the OCB will be a rich experience for an ever-growing audience of book lovers,” said Becca Walton, conference director and Center associate director for projects, “and the Humanities Council has long been an important part of that effort. We are honored to be chosen for this award by the MHC, an organization that provides vital support for so many scholarly and cultural programs in the state.”

The dates for the 2015 Oxford Conference for the Book have been set for Wednesday, March 25, through Friday, March 27.

Mark Your Calendars!

May 21, 2014

Michael Pollan
Nutt Auditorium
University of Mississippi

May 21–23, 2014

SouthDocs/SFA
Film Storytelling Bootcamp
University of Mississippi

May 21–24, 2014

Mississippi Delta Cultural Tour
Mississippi Delta

May 30–31, 2014

Blues and the Spirit Symposium
Chicago, Illinois

June 20–21, 2014

SFA Summer Symposium
Jackson, Mississippi

July 14–18, 2014

SFA Oral History Workshop
University of Mississippi

July 20–24, 2014

Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha
Conference
“Faulkner and History”
University of Mississippi

Ownby Serves OAH, SHA

Ted Ownby was reappointed to the Organization of American Historians’ Distinguished Lecture Program, an initiative in which historians give presentations at institutions that donate their honoraria to the OAH. Ownby’s three lecture topics for the program are “Brotherhood and Brotherhoodism in the Civil Rights–Era South,” “Thinking about a History of the American South in the 1970s,” and “Farm Family, Family Crisis, Family Values: Defining Family in the 20th-Century South.” Ownby has also begun the first year of a three-year term on the Executive Council of the Southern Historical Association.



In Memoriam



Rosia Wade-Crisler

June 9, 1945–April 27, 2014

Cured Meats in the Upper South and Iconic Jackson, Mississippi, Restaurants Added to SFA's Oral History Archive

Cured South

From Kentucky to Tidewater Virginia, from the Shenandoah Valley to the Smoky Mountains, curing traditions preserve food supplies in order to sustain families and neighbors throughout the year. Cured meats of the American South now fill a greater demand beyond necessity. Those who cure, smoke, and preserve share something in common: they are using decades- and sometimes century-old recipes handed down from their ancestors to experiment with new methods and techniques.

Sara Wood gathered 10 stories for the Cured South oral history project. Look for this new collection on the SFA website. Among the people you'll meet: a North Carolina curemaster whose fa-



Sara Wood

(above) Sam Edwards III and Sam Edwards IV, Surry, Virginia, 2014

(left) Redfish and onion rings at the Mayflower Café in Jackson, Mississippi



Rien Fertel

vorite ham comes from the “wooly pig,” a Kentucky caviar purveyor, and a Tennessee high school guidance counselor who quit his job after one week to start his own ham business. Stay tuned for more stories of the Cured South.

Jackson Restaurants

In preparation for the SFA's upcoming

Summer Foodways Symposium, Rien Fertel, Mary Beth Lasseter, and Kimber Thomas collected oral histories from old-guard restaurants in Jackson, Mississippi. In particular, they sought out African American and Greek American figures who have contributed to the city's culinary story. They interviewed restaurateurs like

Mike Kountouris of the Mayflower Café, Balerie Tyrone Bully of Bully's Restaurant, and Bill Matheos of Bill's Greek Tavern. In total, they've recorded 18 interviews, making this one of the larger SFA oral history projects in recent years and the most comprehensive in a single city. Expect to read and hear about a variety of favorite Mississippi foods, from catfish to comeback sauce.

Look for this project online in advance of our Summer Foodways Symposium, which will take place in Jackson on June 20–21.

All of the SFA's oral history interviews—more than 800 and counting—are accessible online at www.southern-foodways.org. Visit our website to explore the stories behind the food.

Interpreting the Enslaved: The Behind the Big House Program in Holly Springs, Mississippi

For the past two years, Southern Studies students have helped to fill gaps in Mississippi interpretations of African American history by participating in the Behind the Big House (BTBH) program in Holly Springs, Mississippi. The program interprets the lives of the enslaved through extant former slave dwellings hidden in plain view. The dwellings were readapted for various uses—making it difficult to recognize their original purposes—and suppressed from historical memory, either unintentionally or by design.

Several private property owners, including Chelius Carter, Jenifer Eggleston, David Person, and Genevieve and Frank Busby, initiated the project. According to Eggleston, “It was clear that a significant part of the historic narrative was missing. While a number of the silent witnesses—the structures directly related to the slaves’ accommodations—were extant, the stories of the people who lived and used these buildings were largely being forgotten.” The BTBH program seeks to remedy these omissions. Since 2012 the program has been a supplement to the yearly Holly Springs Pilgrimage (sponsored by the Garden Club), which has, for over 80 years, historically interpreted the lives of plantation-owning families through historic main houses. BTBH is a distinct program, with 20 sites listed on the tour program. It is free and open to the public, with a select few properties interpreted each year.

Eggleston and Carter, of Preserve Marshall County & Holly Springs, Inc., own the historic Hugh Craft House property, which includes a main house and former slave dwelling. A basement level in the slave dwelling included a room for smoking meat, a first level includes a kitchen and two separate living spaces, and a loft is a living space, likely sleeping quarters for enslaved children. Eggleston, a National Park



Lauren Holt giving a tour at Burton Place

Service grant writer, and Carter, an architectural historian, researched much of the historical information used for its interpretation, as well as interpretations for several other sites, including Burton Place; the Magnolias, the 1851 gothic revival home featured in the film *Cookie's Fortune* (1999); and McCarrroll Place, a former dwelling readapted as an antique store by one of its former owners. Joseph McGill Jr., former program officer with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and founder of the Slave Dwelling Project, offers additional interpretations. McGill, who has been spending nights in slave dwellings to bring attention to the need for their historic preservation, was brought in to help interpret sites.

I met McGill while working in South Carolina and became aware of the Holly Springs program after joining the faculty at the University of Mississippi. During the BTBH program's second season I was teaching a course on Southern heritage tourism, and my thought pro-

cess began to focus on how to organize students interested in the growing field of heritage tourism. In 2013 I chose the BTBH pilot program as a case study, and the class of five students made this applied approach feasible. Carter and Eggleston visited the class to discuss the development of the program. Students interviewed tourism officials in Holly Springs to get a better sense of the tourism political climate and each had the opportunity to work as a docent at more than one property.

I organized a lecture by McGill, held at Barnard Observatory, which was co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture and the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. I also volunteered as a docent and joined Gracing the Table (GTT), a derivative of Coming to the Table, a national organization whose mission is to provide “leadership, resources, and a supportive environment for all who wish to acknowledge and heal wounds from racism that is rooted in the United States’

Courtesy: Jodi Skipper

history of slavery.” GTT was organized as a response to members of the Holly Springs community’s realization that the interpretation of dwellings can become fruitless without the therapeutic work necessary to represent such issues. Through GTT, a group of diverse Holly Springs citizens meet once a month at a neutral location and interact through exercises prompting them to discuss slavery, race, and racism. It is largely a cooperative effort between private citizens and Rust College faculty and students . . . and now some Southern Studies graduate students.

In the program’s third season, first-year graduate student Lauren Holt joined the project. Holt is now a member of the GTT planning committee. This season she took charge of putting together the booklet that the BTBH program provided for local Holly Springs school groups coming through the tour. Working mainly from a guideline for program managers, BTBH information panels, and a high school textbook on Mississippi history, she put together a draft for the text. She also volunteered as a docent for four of the five program days, leading pilgrimage

guests and local school groups. In all, some 450 students from Marshall and Benton county schools came through the program during a three-day period. Purvis Cornish, another first-year graduate student, led some of these school groups at the Hugh Craft House.

Since I began working with the BTBH, I have had several revelations. First, urban slavery has been historically underrepresented through historic preservation programs. Second, if places like Holly Springs are willing to tell more complex stories of their built environments, then it can be a benefit to all. And third, this work cannot be done without the support of institutions like the Mississippi Humanities Council, the Mississippi Development Authority/Tourism Division, local citizens, private landowners who value stories of the underprivileged, and volunteers who see the potentially restorative and reconciliatory value in local history. The BTBH program is a necessary one, yet it can only survive through the support of lovers of history everywhere.

Jodi Skipper

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especially the Department of Music. Thanks to existing faculty in sociology, anthropology, music, and English, UM offers courses on blues and literature, blues anthropology, and African American music traditions. “We are a very interdisciplinary program, so we like to cut across traditional boundaries and find connections between numerous elements of cultural traditions, as do our students,” said Ownby. “The ideal scholar for this professorship will approach the study of Southern music in a multifaceted way. We are not deciding what type of music is important to study, nor are we looking specifically for a jazz scholar, a blues scholar, or a country music scholar. We want someone who cares about how to study music traditions and contemporary music.”

The Feders’ commitment provides a foundation for the professorship, but Ron Feder emphasizes the need for additional support to bring the position to fruition. “We need two types of donors for this endowment: passionate people who can make small, meaningful gifts, and people with the ability to make larger gifts and who want to have a guiding role in bringing this new focus to the Center.” Ownby agrees. “We want to establish an endowment that will be stable enough to support this faculty position indefinitely and solidify the groundwork for a program that will grow in prominence and draw the best students in this field,” he said. “Ron is an invaluable advisory committee member, and he and his family have been very active supporters. We can’t thank them enough, and we’re looking for others who share this interest in music as part of Southern culture.”

Both the Center for the Study of Southern Culture and the Music of the South Endowment are open to receive gifts from individuals and organizations by sending a check with the fund noted in the memo line to the UM Foundation, P.O. Box 249, University, MS 38677, contacting Nikki Neely at 662-915-6678 or nlneely@olemiss.edu, or by donating online at southernstudies.olemiss.edu/friends.

Katie S. Morrison



Former slave dwelling at Burton Place in Holly Springs

Politics and Public Service

Some faculty members like to say that Southern Studies students can do anything. Among the many students who concentrated on issues of justice and injustice, politics and power, several have gone on into positions in policymaking, organizing, and politics.

Tiffany Hamelin Cabrera is a historian in the U.S. State Department's Office of the Historian. She works in the Policy Studies Division, where she carries out policy-supportive historical studies and projects in the field of U.S. foreign relations for State Department officials and other government agencies. She graduated from the University of Mississippi with a BA, majoring in journalism and French, followed by a master's in Southern Studies, where she worked with the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation and wrote a thesis on activists in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Not wanting to end her education there, she earned a second MA in history from UM and a PhD in history from Howard University in Washington, D.C.

"Much of my interests from my time at Ole Miss dovetailed with a burgeoning interest in the Vietnam War and U.S. foreign relations," Cabrera says. "My dissertation focused on self-immolation during the Vietnam War; like the civil rights movement, self-immolations in both Vietnam and the United States took place during the mid-1960s and were powerful nonviolent protests. Within weeks of defending my proposal, I was offered my dream job here at the Department of State and began in May 2008."

Cabrera, a military child who grew up in Florida, Kentucky, South Dakota, and California, was part of a group of graduate students who documented the 40th reunion of the Freedom Rides. "This oral history experience had a major impact on my professional life," she says. "A handful of colleagues here at the State Department and I have launched an oral history program that documents the history of U.S. foreign relations, which brings a historical perspective to current policy making."

Her work focuses on two subseries: Special Envoys and Representatives,

Tiffany Hamelin Cabrera



Tiffany Hamelin Cabrera

Cristen Hemmins



Cristen Hemmins

and African Americans in the State Department, and she has had the opportunity to interview Senator George Mitchell, Ambassador Andrew Young, the special envoys to Sudan and North Korea, and Ambassador Edward Perkins, among others.

Cristen Hemmins became heavily involved in politics in the spring of 2011, working to defeat Initiative 26 (The Personhood Initiative). "Once the official campaign started, really only a month or so before the election, I was sort of the unofficial face of the campaign, which we felt was important because we wanted to make sure people knew there were local, Mississippi people who felt really strongly about this," Hemmins says.

During that campaign, national and international media outlets such as

Slate, *Salon*, the *Rachel Maddow Show*, and *BBC World News* interviewed her. "Because of that victory with defeating Initiative 26, I, along with a lot of other people in this state, felt incredibly empowered by what grassroots activism could achieve," she says.

After launching her career into activism and politics, she started attending Democratic Party meetings, became a delegate, and attended the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 2012. She also be-

Steve Holland



Steve Holland

came vice-chairperson of the Lafayette County Democrats. “That’s when I really started paying attention to the legislation that is happening in Jackson and became really aware of how unrepresented I was in our state government.”

She says she would someday like to run for office, but she is trying to figure out what office would be the best one to start with, since with three young children, she isn’t quite ready to spend a third of the year in Jackson. For now, she concentrates her energies on helping to get other Democrats elected and keeping the Democratic platform front and center. She is also on the board of LOU-Home Inc., which seeks to make the dream of homeownership achievable for low-income individuals in the Lafayette County-Oxford-University area.

State Representative **Steve Holland**, a fifth-generation Lee County native, is both a legislator and funeral home director. “I love being a representative because it gives me a marketplace to debate those critical issues that can truly bring about a better way of life for Mississippians,” says Holland, who has represented the 16th district since 1985. “Serving during session and making our laws is important, responsible work, but in reality only a fraction of our job. I spend countless hours with my constituents and with people from all over the state.”

A Democrat, Holland won eight consecutive elections and has remained the District 16 member of the Mississippi House for 31 years, the all-time longevity record for Lee County for any public official. He graduated from Mississippi State, but almost three decades later he decided he wanted a Southern Studies master’s degree. Challenged by Chancellor Emeritus Robert Khayat to reshape his thinking and hone his desire to elicit change, he enrolled in the Southern Studies program.

“The program made me realize who I am as a Southerner, what my role is among my family and Southern peers, and why the South was worthy of fighting for in future years,” Holland says. “With the writing requirements, certainly my speaking and writing abilities were strengthened along the way. The Southern Studies program completely changed my way of thinking about my native region and answered so many questions about the relation-



Ford O'Connell

ships our people have with one another and outsiders, why we cling to the past, and how we interact with the rest of the country and the world.”

Ford O'Connell's face may look familiar for those who watch Fox News, CNN, CNBC, or other news networks, or his name may be recognizable from bylines in *USA Today*, *People* magazine, or on ESPN.com. As a political analyst and Republican strategist who served as an adviser on the 2008 McCain-Palin presidential campaign, it’s his job to put fires out for clients or introduce new hot topics in the media.

“Growing up, I had only two loves—football and politics, and at a very early age I knew I was never going to be the starting quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys,” O’Connell jokes. “Of course that didn’t stop me from playing football in college, or at least trying, but my grandfather was politically active, so over time politics became a natural fit for me.”

O’Connell, a native of Houston, Texas, who resides in the Washington, D.C., area, also helped with Haley Barbour’s gubernatorial campaign in 2007. In 2009 he cofounded Project Virginia to help Virginia Republicans implement innovative digital media and voter mobilization technologies.

Armed with degrees from Swarthmore College, the University of Mississippi, Duke University, Northwestern University, and the University of Virginia School of Law, he is well equipped to be an active participant in democracy using a variety of media to communicate with people about the inner workings of American politics.

“Having lived on ‘both sides’ of this ever-widening regional divide, I wanted to position myself to be able to speak intelligently on the intricacies of Southern culture,” O’Connell says. “The program’s broad-based curriculum



Judith Roberts

gave me that hook, and for that I will be forever grateful to Ole Miss.”

Judith Roberts is the program director for Racial Justice Ministries for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in Chicago. The ELCA collaborates on issues of racial injustice both domestically and globally. “I like to believe I was called/sent to the ELCA, and within this ministry I am involved with issues that impact communities of color,” Roberts says. “I have an opportunity to do this work at multiple levels, from supporting congregations and leaders on the front lines to advocating for policies that remove barriers for voices that are marginalized.”

Though Roberts was born in Connecticut, her parents and grandparents have deep Southern roots, and she spent summers in with her maternal grandparents in McComb, Mississippi. Her grandfather, C. C. Bryant, was the local NAACP president and an active leader in his community, workplace, and congregation.

It wasn’t until Roberts began to research more about the civil rights struggle that she understood the significant contributions everyday people made to change the course of history. After she completed an independent biographical research project on Bryant’s role in the civil rights movement during her undergraduate studies at Springfield College, her professors, as well as her parents, encouraged her to continue researching her grandfather’s legacy. So she enrolled

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in the Southern Studies MA program and worked with the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation.

"I completed a short documentary film featuring interviews with my grandfather and other leaders of the civil rights movement. My experience at the university as a researcher gave me more time with my grandfather and the opportunity to have access to a wealth of resources that I otherwise would have missed," she says. "I think the Southern Studies program gave me the background to go deeper in understanding the history and culture of this region, and having this experience of working and living in Mississippi continues to shape this journey."

Patrick Weems transferred to the University of Mississippi from Loyola University in New Orleans in 2005 and was a bit surprised when he looked around at his classmates. "I realized how segregated our campus was, and I began having conversations with friends about race on campus. I soon found out about the Winter Institute, so I started hanging out around Vardaman Hall."

One of the projects with which the Winter Institute was involved at that time was a group of newly elected politicians from Tallahatchie County who wanted to do something around Emmett Till's memory and in his honor. From there, the Emmett Till Memorial Commission began, and Weems was able to attend the meetings in the Delta and be involved in early conversations.

After graduating from UM, Weems continued his work with the Winter Institute, developing the Summer Youth Institute and helping support One Mississippi. He began graduate work in Southern Studies and was asked to be the first director of the Emmett Till Interpretive Center in Sumner.

"It's tough to keep community groups together, so we began local community conversations to pull in some new people who want to tell their story," Weems says. "We are telling the story of Sumner's past, we're telling the story of Sumner's present, and trying to figure out Sumner's future."

Weems says the future of the area is bright for the 400 residents of Tallahatchie County. "It's really difficult for any community to have conversations about the past, but especially for a community like Sumner, which has had



Patrick Weems



Brian Wilson

a cloud over it for a long time. So it's exciting to be in those rooms with 80-year-old white men and 20-year-old black men who are sitting down talking about the past and trying to agree on where we are now and how we move forward."

As a partner with Capstone Public Affairs in Jackson, **Brian Wilson** helps Mississippi clients, such as universities, nonprofits, economic developers, and local businesses, navigate the bureaucracy of Washington and Jackson. He also assists with public relations and grassroots advocacy, such as the creation of three national heritage areas in Mississippi. Last year, he also joined Triumph Campaigns as a partner, which is a national political consulting firm based in Jackson and founded by UM alum Justin Brasell.

Before Capstone, Wilson was the senior legislative assistant to Senator Trent Lott for five years, which he says

were rewarding and eye-opening. "I loved helping communities and leaders in Mississippi provide infrastructure and quality-of-life improvements," he says. "Most politicians love to talk about economic development and job creation, but many don't understand that quality schools and public infrastructure are integral to economic development. My boss got it and made no apologies for fighting for Mississippi."

Wilson, who wrote his MA thesis on Mississippi political figure L. Q. C. Lamar, credits his Southern Studies master's studies in aiding his work, since the ability to research, to write, and to make reasoned arguments is essential to good public policy.

"The interdisciplinary nature of the Southern Studies program reflects the interplay of diverse disciplines and critical thinking skills necessary in understanding problems and then solving them," Wilson says. "Often events move so fast that there is no time to truly reflect and consider a position. It's easy for one to get caught up in the zero-sum game of two-party politics and end up only mimicking the talking points of the loudest media talking head at the moment or the echo chamber of our like-minded friends. The give-and-take with diverse classmates and faculty gave me the invaluable opportunity to really analyze my opinions; some were reinforced, while others were reconsidered."

Rebecca Lauck Cleary

Rex Jones Wins Filmmaking Award for *Beautiful Jim*

This past April, Rex Jones, a filmmaker for the Southern Documentary Project, won the Programmers' Choice Award at the 15th Annual Crossroads Film Festival in Jackson, Mississippi, for his

film *Beautiful Jim*. Jones's film was released in September 2013. It was an official selection of both the Oxford Film Festival in February and the Nashville Film Festival in April.

The film's subject is Jimbeau Hinson, a Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter living in Nashville, Tennessee, who has been HIV positive for over 30 years. Hinson was also the first openly bisexual singer-songwriter in country music and has been married to his wife, Brenda Fielder, for 33 years. He has almost died from AIDS twice, although he is now HIV-undetectable. He recently received a record deal and released a new album at age 62.

"This award was an incredible honor that validates the power and appeal of Jimbeau and Brenda's story and the important work my colleagues and I are doing at the Southern Documentary Project," said Jones.

Rex Jones joined SouthDocs in 2011. A Hickory, Mississippi, native, Jones earned an MFA in science and natural history filmmaking from Montana State University and is a graduate of Mississippi State University.

Photo courtesy: Rex Jones



Rex Jones (right) with Jimbeau Hinson and his wife, Brenda Fielder

Jimmy Thomas

Transforming New South Identities

On February 27–March 1, the Center for the Study of Southern Culture hosted the Transforming New South Identities Symposium, organized by Jodi Skipper and Michele Coffey from the University of Memphis. The following scholars gathered at the Center to workshop and examine the field of Southern Studies as a whole: Martyn Bone, Alix Chapman, Kirsten Dellinger, John Hayes, Zac Henson, Jeff Jackson, Anne Lewis, Sabrina Pendergrass, Tom Okie, Susan O'Donovan, Emily Satterwhite, Jon Smith, and Daniel Cross Turner. Charles Reagan Wilson gave the opening keynote address on "Reimagining Southern Studies: Time and Space, Bodies and Spirits."

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.

Rebecca Lauck Cleary is the Center's senior staff assistant and website administrator. She received a BA in journalism from the University of Mississippi in 1997 and has written for the *Southern Register* since 2005.

Leslie Hassel is a recent MA graduate in the Southern Studies program and graduate assistant for *Living Blues*.

Xaris A. Martínez is a graduate of the UM Southern Studies program (MA 2011) and a doctoral student in history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Katie S. Morrison is a University of Mississippi communications specialist.

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

Elaine Pugh is a University of Mississippi communications specialist.

Jodi Skipper is an assistant professor of anthropology and Southern Studies at the University of Mississippi.

Jay Watson is a professor of English at the University of Mississippi and director of the Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference. His publications include *Faulkner and Whiteness* and *Reading for the Body: The Recalcitrant Materiality of Southern Fiction, 1893–1985*.

Southern Studies Undergrad Awarded Hall of Fame Distinction

On January 31, 2014, Chancellor Dan Jones bestowed the honor of membership in the school's 2013–14 Hall of Fame to 10 University of Mississippi seniors. The Hall of Fame is one of the university's highest honors. Among those 10 seniors was Southern Studies undergraduate Neal McMillin. Recipients are chosen by a committee pursuant to ASB policy, with selections based on a student's academic achievement, community service, and potential for future success.



Courtesy of Neal McMillin

Neal McMillin majored in Southern Studies and economics. A member of the University of Mississippi Honors College, he is a Newman Scholar and Barnard Scholar. He has studied abroad twice, including as recipient of a Barksdale Award to investigate Scotland's pioneering use of the ocean for renewable energy. Listed on the Chancellor's Honor Roll, he is a member of Phi Kappa Phi and recipient of a Taylor Medal. He placed first in the Formal Essay category in UM's Southern Literary Festival, and his articles have appeared in *Land of Plenty*, published by the School of Journalism and New Media. He is a member of several academic and leadership honor societies, including Omicron Delta Kappa, Sigma Alpha Lambda, and Phi Eta Sigma, and he received the Interfraternity Council Academic and Leadership Excellence Award. He served as an ASB senator and Honors College ambassador. He recently won the Gray Award for one of the best two papers by a Southern Studies undergraduate. His parents are Tommy and Ruth McMillin.

Elaine Pugh

Southern Studies Students and Alumni in Letters

The *Southern Register* could run a story every issue about the accomplishments of Southern Studies alumni who are writers and editors. Beginning with recent award winners, we have learned that Amy Clukey, who teaches English at the University of Louisville, won the Louis D. Rubin Award from the Society for the Study of Southern Literature for the year's best scholarly paper on Southern literature. Kari Edwards, a Southern Studies alumna pursuing a PhD in history at UM, won the Academy of American Religion's award for best paper by a graduate student. "Evie M," a short story by MA alumnus and *Mississippi Encyclopedia* managing editor Odie Lindsey has been selected for *The Best American Short Stories 2014*.

In the world of journals and magazines, Vicksburg alumna Lauchlin Fields has started a new Mississippi culture magazine called *The 'Sip*, the first issue of which included an article by Southern Studies alumnus Hicks Wogan. In Texas, Sarah Condon is writing columns in *The Mockingbird*, and Woody Skinner has a new story in *Hobart*. In Jackson, Nell Linton Knox is writing pieces for *Portico*. Emory graduate student Alan Pike continues his work for the online journal *Southern Spaces*. Graduating students Erin Scott, Rachael Walker, and Neal McMillin had pieces in *Land of Plenty*, a publication on Delta food issues produced by a class in the Meek School of Journalism. Sarah Alford Ballard brought her journalism students from Jackson to the University of Mississippi in March. Former students Camilla Aikin, Mark Coltrane, Katie Lambert, Melanie Young, and May graduate Leslie Hassel have all written articles and reviews in recent issues of *Living Blues*.

In the book world, Kirsten Schofield is a commissioning editor for the History Press in Charleston, and Duvall Osteen has expanded her work with Aragi, Inc. in New York and is now representing writers. Michelle Bright is teaching writing in UM's Center for Writing and Rhetoric. Preston Lauterbach's 2012 volume *The Chitlin' Circuit* is included in *100 Books Every Blues Fan Should Own*, just published by Edward Komara and Greg Johnson.

The many students and alumni speaking at academic conferences include Illinois State University history professor Amy Wood and University of Missouri sociology PhD student Teah Hairston, alums who spoke at the university's Conference on Rethinking Mass Incarceration in the South in April, and current students Paige Prather and Kate Hudson, who spoke the same event. Anna Hamilton gave a paper at Flagler College's Ideas & Images lecture series about her thesis on the datil pepper, Erin Scott and Lindsey Reynolds made foodways presentations at the Converse College conference *Okra to Opera*, and Kaitlyn Vogt and Shawna Felkins presented papers at the Gender studies conference at the Sarah Isom Center.

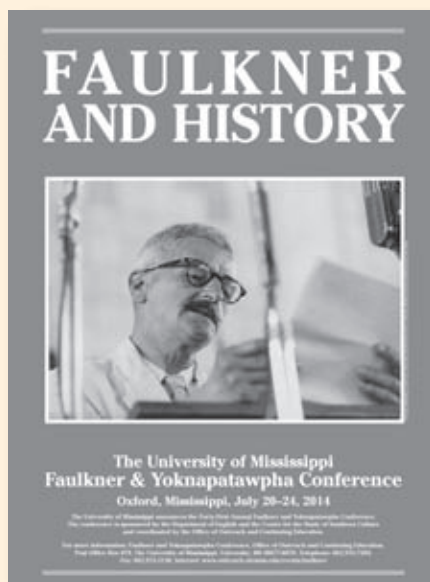
Ted Ownby

Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference 2014 “Faulkner and History”

An international cast of historians, literary critics, documentarians, creative writers, and independent scholars will join the six keynote speakers on the program for the 2014 Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference, “Faulkner and History,” July 20–24, at the University of Mississippi. January’s call for papers yielded an additional 13 conference sessions featuring 40 speakers, many of them appearing at Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha for the first time.

Panel topics for “Faulkner and History” will include the following: “Histories of Labor and Technology,” “History Makes Faulkner: Manufacturing a Midcentury Reputation,” “History, Fiction, and Interracial Intimacies in Faulkner,” “Thinking Literature and History Comparatively” (featuring Faulkner in conjunction with other 20th-century writers), “Faulkner, Modern Art, and Modern War,” “Local and Regional Histories,” “Visions of History,” “Faulkner in the History of Modernity,” “Faulknerian Temporalities,” “Staging Southern Histories,” “History, Power, and Gender,” “Moonshine and Magnolias: A History of Spirits in Faulkner’s Mississippi,” and “Deciphering Sutpen’s Hundred: Ideology, Representation, and the Politics of Aesthetics in *Absalom, Absalom!*”

This year’s panelists include Serena Blount (University of Alabama), Katherine Isabel Bondy (University of California, Berkeley), Jordan Burke (Yale University), Jaclyn Carver (University of Iowa), Rebecca Clark (University of California, Berkeley), Deborah Clarke (Arizona State University), Anna Creadick (Hobart and William Smith Colleges), David M. Earle (University of West Florida), Daniel Ferris (De Anza College in Cupertino, California), Jason D. Fichtel (Joliet Junior College), Peter Alan Froehlich (Pennsylvania State University, Hazleton), Frank P. Fury (Monmouth University), Sarah E. Gardner (Mercer University), Jennifer Gilchrist (Hunter College), Hannah



Godwin (University of Oregon), Lael Gold (independent scholar), Sharony Green (University of Alabama), Charles Hannon (Washington & Jefferson College), Brooks E. Hefner (James Madison University), Kristi Rowan Humphreys (Texas Tech University), Josh Jones (independent scholar), Satoshi Kanazawa (Kyoto Prefectural University), Meredith Kelling (independent scholar), Andrew B. Leiter (Lycoming College), Sean McCann (Wesleyan University), Conor Picken (Bellarmine University), Christopher Rieger (Southeast Missouri State University), Esther Sánchez-Pardo (Complutense University, Madrid), Calvin Schermerhorn (Arizona State University), Elizabeth Steeby (University of New Orleans), Mark Sursavage (University of Houston), Matthew Sutton (William and Mary), George Porter Thomas (University of California, Davis), Sara Gabler Thomas (University of Mississippi), Carrie Helms Tippen (Texas Christian University), Candace Waid (University of California, Santa Barbara), Sarah Walker (University of Iowa), Rachel Watson (University of Chicago), Randall Wilhelm (Anderson University), and novelist Margaret

Wrinkle. In addition, three scholars from the Digital Yoknapatawpha project, Stephen Railton (University of Virginia), Dotty Dye (Arizona State University), and Theresa Towner (University of Texas, Dallas), will provide a progress report on the project at a special lunchtime session on Monday, July 21.

The evening session for the conference’s opening day on Sunday, July 20, will showcase a pair of films documenting 20th-century rural and small-town life in Faulkner’s native state. “Visualizing Mississippi Histories: Two Short Films” will feature Emma Knowlton Lytle’s *Raisin’ Cotton*, a documentary created from black-and-white footage she shot in the early 1940s of African American and white subjects who lived and worked on the Mississippi Delta plantations of Perthshire and Highlandale, and Michael Ford’s *Homeplace*, a 1972 film documenting folk life in the north Mississippi hill-country counties of Lafayette, Marshall, Panola, and Tate. Andy Harper, director of the Southern Documentary Project at the University of Mississippi’s Center for the Study of Southern Culture, will provide introductory remarks on *Raisin’ Cotton*. Ford, who holds a BFA in photography and film from Rochester Institute of Technology and an MS in broadcasting and film from Boston University, will return to Oxford—where he was an apprentice for three years in the 1970s to blacksmith Marion Randolph Hall—to introduce his film.

For registration and other conference information, visit the Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha website at www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner or contact Jay Watson, director, at jwatson@olemiss.edu. Discount rates for the conference are available for groups of five or more students. Inexpensive dormitory housing is available for interested registrants. Contact Robert Fox at rfox@olemiss.edu for details.

Jay Watson

From the Stacks

From the Stacks is a series of occasional reviews by Southern Studies faculty and friends about old and possibly forgotten books. Along with summarizing and potentially critiquing them, the series will ask why and also how we might read them today. The series begins with a book published in 1964.

Sarah Patton Boyle's *For Human Beings Only: A Primer for Human Understanding* (New York: Seabury Press, 1964, out of print) is an intriguing how-to volume about the process of racial desegregation. Boyle was a Charlottesville, Virginia, resident who took part in desegregation work in the 1950s and 1960s. *For Human Beings Only* was Boyle's second book, following by a year her memoir, *The Desegregated Heart*, which told her story of the 13 years after what she described as a conversion to interracial work in 1950.

For Human Beings Only is a short volume of 124 pages divided into a long section, "For White Only," a shorter section, "For Colored Only," and a four-page conclusion, "For All of Us." One notable feature of the volume was its lack of references to other works. Fifty years later, I suspect that anyone writing about antiracist work or intentional communities or diversity training or racialization theory or reconciliation would draw from a wide array of scholarly and other work. Except for a reference to the American Anthropological Association's 1961 rejection of racial difference and a single footnote, Boyle drew from her own experience. The book began, "This is, I believe, the first book of its kind. Its purpose is to smooth the rough path to friendship between individual and colored Americans."

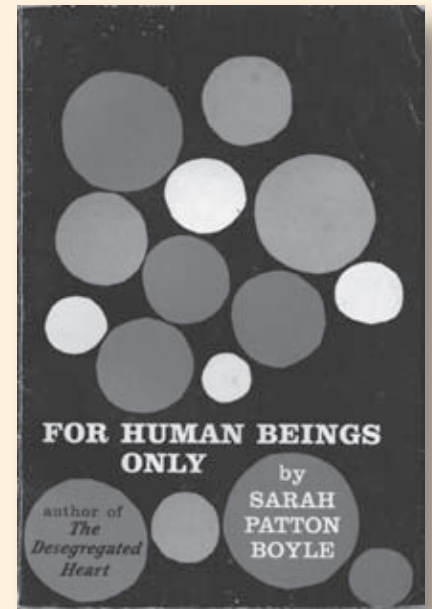
As a primer, the book offered advice about individual action. It discussed how to speak, what language to use, how to talk, what to talk about, and what not to say. The language emphasized friendships, brotherhood, and human relationships, and it often read more like an etiquette guide than a civil rights-era call for justice. Boyle was self-conscious about her own self-consciousness, and she encouraged it in others, if only for a while.

In the first section, Boyle stressed that whites should understand that life was harder for African Americans than they

probably realized, with physical dangers, limits on freedom, large and small inconveniences and uncertainties, insults, and emotional stresses. Second, whites should check their language to avoid terms, topics, and stereotypes that create or assume division and insult. She was specific about rejecting terms that suggest insiders and outsiders, and she urged readers to replace the words "race" and "race relations" with "group" and "human relations." Third, she cautioned some whites against having such an "eager-beaver ardor" for interracial friendships that they did not actually get to know people as individuals.

The second section, "For Colored Only," perhaps contained the most surprises. Boyle had a great deal to say to African Americans who might be dealing for the first time with whites in activist settings. In a long passage that begins the section, she told an anecdote about a white woman who had offended African American guests in her home by serving them on television trays. Other stories mentioned offenses that came from blowing the car horn or calling new friends by their first names. Writing to African Americans, she urged patience with individual errors and misunderstandings while condemning those who called for patience with the pace of social change. She could be aggressive in that call for patience, once writing, "A relationship with a Negro often is so distorted, so unnatural, because of his suspicions and resentments that only a white who is what I call a bulldog-for-brotherhood will continue to subject himself to it."

I suspect it would be easy to criticize *For Human Beings Only*. The most obvious way is that it avoided structural issues of economics, the law, politics, and most questions of class. Many readers might find the book naïve—a criticism that Boyle feared—in its beginning assumption that "individual friendships, more than anything else, will heal the wounds of our na-



tion," and many would likely want more discussions of rights and justice.

Why might one read a 50-year-old advice book? Some readers might want to consider which issues seem relevant and which are obsolete and why, and many might be intrigued by Boyle's choice of the etiquette guide as her format. As a historian, one can read it as an example of its moment, when all sorts of exciting and hopeful signs seemed to point toward the progress Boyle hoped, with her small book, to advance. It is an optimistic book that said optimism only came with sustained and often difficult work and not just good intentions. The conclusion soars with both relief and hope—relief about a "sense of wholeness" possible "when the two largest segments of American humanity unite and face the world as one" and hope she found in realizing that "Negro Americans are presently the best Americans." One can also read Boyle's book in light of scholarship on racial deconstruction. Scholars have offered numerous ways to deconstruct ideas about essential racial difference; Boyle, with ideas about "how to function as total human beings," offered a Christian kind of universalism that said true and deep understanding and empathy should undercut all notions of difference.

Ted Ownby

Reading the South

March: Book One

By John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell. Marietta, GA: Top Shelf Productions, 2013. 121 pp. \$14.95 paperback.

If you were never a comic book fan, you might be suspicious of the graphic genre's ability to tell a serious story. *March* puts those doubts to rest. In the vein of Art Spiegelman's *Maus* (a story of the Holocaust told in comic book format), *March: Book One* chronicles the early life of civil rights leader and 12th-term U.S. Representative John Lewis, from his boyhood in rural Alabama to his involvement in the Nashville student sit-in movement. Published in summer 2013, this is the first volume in Lewis's *March* trilogy of graphic memoirs.

March is the result of a somewhat unlikely collaboration between Lewis, his congressional aide Andrew Aydin, and artist Nate Powell. In 2008, Aydin, a comic book fan, caught flack from his fellow Lewis staffers for his hobby. Lewis defended his young employee, recalling a comic book about Martin Luther King Jr. that circulated among college students in the early days of the civil rights movement. *Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story* was published by the Fellowship of Reconciliation, commonly known as FOR. It employed the format of a comic book to introduce student activists to the principles and strategies of nonviolence and passive resistance that would become the trademark tactics of the movement.

Inspired by the FOR comic book, Aydin convinced his boss that they could share Lewis's story with a new audience by presenting it in graphic-memoir form. They enlisted the services of Nate Powell, a young artist from Little Rock who had already



earned acclaim for his comics and graphic novels.

Narrated from Lewis's perspective, *March* opens on the morning of January 20, 2009, as the congressman prepares to attend the inauguration of President Barack Obama. It quickly flashes back to his childhood in rural Pike County, Alabama, and follows Lewis to college in Nashville, where he establishes himself as a leader in the student sit-ins. The volume ends in May 1960, when, worn down by the persistence of Lewis, Diane Nash, and others, a handful of downtown Nashville lunch counters agreed to serve African American customers.

In its first year of publication, *March* has topped the *New York Times* best-seller list in the graphic category—an impressive feat for a volume on a historical subject. Much of the praise it has received has centered on the book's potential to tell Lewis's story to a “new audience.” This does not mean a children's or young adult audience so much as one of Millennials who might otherwise avoid historical memoir in

their reading material. Powell's work has a strong following among fans of the graphic genre, as does the catalog of Atlanta-based comics publisher Top Shelf Productions. *March* is accessible without feeling oversimplified, and indeed it might become a successful teaching tool in middle and high school classrooms.

Students of civil rights and Southern history, including those who have read Lewis's 1999 memoir *Walking with the Wind*, might be inclined to dismiss *March* for their own reading. And to be fair, it's unlikely that serious history buffs will learn any new details of Lewis's story in the first volume. But I encourage them to pick up a copy of *March* nonetheless. Powell's graphics, rendered in shades of black and white, are bold and affecting, pairing powerfully with the simple, engaging prose cowritten by Lewis and Aydin. Read *March* by yourself, read it with your class, read it with your older children. By the time Lewis, Aydin, and Powell announce the release date for volume two, you'll be eager for more.

Sara Camp Arnold

Pageants, Parlors, and Pretty Women: Race and Beauty in the Twentieth-Century South

By Blain Roberts. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014. 384 pages. \$39.95 cloth.

In *Pageants, Parlors, and Pretty Women*, Blain Roberts examines the ways in which white and black Southern women pursued beauty and embodied racial identity during the 20th century in ways that were both personally liber-

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

ating and collectively oppressive. Her exploration of cosmetic use and beauty rituals in the South—and the ideologies that shaped their influence on the region—illustrates how an individual's consumption could have racial implications and political consequences.

Roberts, an associate professor of history at California State University at Fresno, begins by examining the challenges faced by the modern beauty industry in infiltrating the South in the early 20th century. The majority of Southerners lived in rural settings as late as 1920, which hindered access to commercially produced cosmetics. More importantly, however, were the ideological grounds that made white Southern women reluctant to use beauty products. The “prescriptive ideals of Southern ladyhood” dictated that elite white women were beautiful as a result of innate virtue. At best, critics contended, cosmetic use was a brazen attempt by the consumer to appear as something she was not; at worst, “face painting” was indicative of a white woman's disreputability and disregard for her subservient role in the Southern social system. Cosmetic companies were finally able to overcome these fears, argues Roberts, when their advertising allies democratized the defining physical marker of a Southern lady—whiteness—by suggesting that all white Southern women could exhibit this exclusionary and racialized female beauty through the use of cosmetic products. Associating makeup with an iconic regional figure thus mitigated the social threat posed by these modern beauty products and also strengthened Jim Crow segregation by erasing class divisions among white women.

While “white women transformed themselves into made-up Southern ladies,” black women sought out goods and services that would help them construct a respectable femininity. Products such as hair straighteners and skin bleaches began to be commercially available by the late 19th century, but their use became



increasingly controversial in the 20th century because of their harmful ingredients and the implication that the “whiter” features promised by these products were more attractive than “black” ones. Early beauty culturists responded by selling hair pomades and other folk remedies door to door and by mail order. While these products improved hair health, their purveyors also faced accusations that the hair straightening regimens they advocated helped black women look white. Questions regarding what a beautiful head of black hair should look like were, according to Roberts, “at the heart of the politics of respectability” and thus a source of contention between African American leaders concerned with racial uplift and beauticians who viewed beauty work as beneficial to themselves and the larger black community. Black women who sold beauty products helped support their families, while those who trained to be beauticians were able to work in jobs free of white supervision. Moreover, beauticians were able to operate beauty parlors that provided their patrons with a space where they could relax, be pampered, and socialize. Roberts makes

excellent use of scholarship in the field of sensory history in this chapter (Chapter 2, “Shop Talk”) to examine “the tactile and olfactory dimensions of the beautifying process,” allowing the reader to feel the heat given off by metal combs, smell the hot oil, and listen in on the “shop talk” among black women that encouraged grassroots political action against Jim Crow.

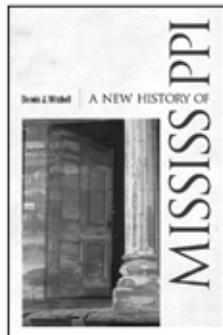
While the first half of the book focuses on the daily and mostly private cosmetic rituals of Southern women, Roberts shifts her focus in the second half to public rituals that placed women's bodies and appearance on display—namely, body and beauty contests. These rituals had their mid-19th-century origins in rural agricultural fairs, where the domestic goods and babies of white Southern women were competitively displayed and evaluated. By the early 20th century, the baby show component was supplanted by better baby contests and 4-H club health pageants that drew on eugenics in order to determine which bodies were racially “superior.” While the home demonstration agents who sponsored these rituals were concerned with assessing the hygiene and attire of rural women, Roberts argues that they unwittingly set a precedent that linked a woman's agricultural contributions to her body. Trade boards tapped into this precedent at the onset of the Depression and began to host beauty contests in which rural women's bodies were presented as commodity crops to be evaluated. The public appraisal and scrutiny of a woman's face and form at these contests was thus tied into a larger tradition of annual agricultural festivities in the region while, at times, embracing sensual aspects of previously suspect bathing beauty revues. Photographs of these white crop queens were subsequently used as advertising tools to generate both national and international interest in Southern crops during the 1930s. Roberts claims that by the 1940s the evaluation and marketing of these contestants led to the

regionwide acceptance and popularity of white Southern beauty queens as both agrarian and sexual symbols.

Black Southern women challenged this “whitewashing of Southern agriculture”—and the white ideal of beauty underlying it—by participating in body and beauty contests of their own. While black crop queens were uncommon, African American home demonstration agents sponsored health pageants in the rural South, and middle-class matrons put on fashion shows in the urban South that celebrated black female beauty. Roberts argues that, more importantly, these and other contests were also an attempt by the black middle class to rid their rural and working-class counterparts of an aesthetic they believed compromised their race’s claims to respectability; their attempts at setting themselves as the “arbiters of good taste” for their racial community, which consisted of enforcing regulations regarding both clothing and deportment, were especially evident on black college campuses. This institutional focus allows Roberts to explore how female students from different socioeconomic classes and geographic settings managed the demands made of their bodies through dress codes and rules regarding proper behavior, while at the same time trying to enjoy their access to new consumer goods and avoid accusations that they were being “too black” or aspiring to “be white.” In this context, body and beauty rituals such as homecoming queen competitions were yet another way in which administrators could encourage female students to conform to middle-class ideals of respectable black femininity and admonish those who failed to do so.

Roberts concludes her book by looking at the role of beauty in the civil rights movement, arguing that there was a connection between unrest in the South and the concurrent success of white Southern women at the Miss America Pageant. Winning the title five times between 1954 and 1963, Southern beauty queens served as public symbols of white supremacy that partially disguised unpleasant aspects of massive resistance to racial integration that were being televised around the nation. At first, black Southern women sought to undermine “the symbolic power of white beauty queens” by participating in all-black beauty contests and even attempting to integrate white ones. But by the mid-1960s, young black activists had grown frustrated with “the traditional aesthetic of respectability” and began to embrace an aesthetic that denoted both blackness and a commitment to the radical politics of Black Power. This “Black is Beautiful” movement, along with the nascent second-wave feminist movement of the period, ensured that questions about female beauty and the public’s perception of women’s bodies would continue to be controversial during the late 20th century. Roberts’s compelling narrative challenges historians to integrate the pursuit of beauty in their examinations of race and poli-

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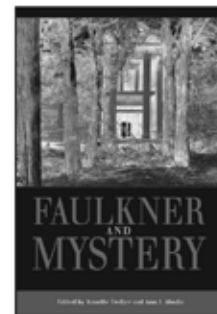
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tics in the modern South and would also be of interest to scholars interested in consumer culture, whiteness studies, and the intersections between regionalism and national identity.

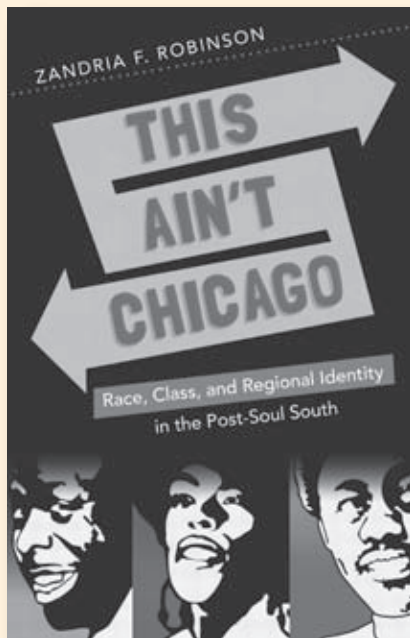
Xaris A. Martínez

This Ain't Chicago: Race, Class, and Regional Identity in the Post-Soul South

By Zandria Robinson. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014. 238 pages. \$29.95.

Zandria Robinson's new book, *This Ain't Chicago: Race, Class, and Regional Identity in the Post-Soul South*, is an invaluable contribution to UNC Press's New Directions in Southern Studies Series, and it is a must read for anyone seriously interested in gaining a more nuanced understanding of contemporary black attitudes about racism as funneled through a regional or place-based lens. In a society obsessed with the idea that the election of President Barack Obama somehow meant we had reached a postracial state, frank discussions regarding black attitudes about race (specifically racism) are missing from the literature. *This Ain't Chicago* corrects that error.

The book focuses on Memphis, Tennessee, which some term the "Mid-South." However, akin to claims made by her University of Memphis colleague and former mentor, Wanda Rushing, Robinson dually situates Memphis as both part of a local and global landscape. Memphis seems an appropriate case study for this examination, for the city provides a lens into regional identities as shaped through the context of urban change. Like the respondents she identifies, Memphis's identity emerges through something of an amalgamation process. A number of factors contribute to this. Memphis's geographic location factors heavi-



ly into the black identities constructed there. As the first major city on the way north out of the Mississippi Delta, Memphis became an important intermediate or end destination during the Great Migration. Further, reverse migration trends discernible since the late 1960s identify that many have returned to Memphis. Situated along the great Mississippi River, it has both rural and urban sensibilities. Its history is also significant. Memphis is the self-described "home of the blues," but Robinson also firmly establishes its place in hip-hop culture. It is the site of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination, which it does not shy away from, but it also houses the National Civil Rights Museum. The dichotomies do not end there. "A blue-collar town," it is also the home of Fortune 500 companies like FedEx and important research centers like Saint Jude. Current demographic trends also factor into its appropriateness as a case. Memphis is the 20th largest city in the nation and has a majority black population of almost 63 percent. All of these evidence how "People and places have a dialectical relationship." Amidst this diversity, multiple Souths are shaped. And the reader is able to see ties and chinks in black solidarity, which elucidate "a

multiplicity of black identities [available] in the twenty-first century."

On both scales—the local and the global—Robinson deftly argues the credibility of this duality. Ironically, she also establishes that Memphis is both South but not South, and it is this dichotomy that allows the black residents of Memphis she interviews to craft an identity she terms "country cosmopolitan."

Country cosmopolitanism is both a framework and identity, which posits that Southern blackness is a superior black identity, which allows blacks to navigate the racial hierarchies and prejudices prevalent in U.S. society with minimal scarring. Robinson writes, "Country cosmopolitanism is a best-of-both-worlds blackness that address the embattled notion of racial authenticity in a post-black era by hearkening back to and modernizing rural, country tropes. [I]t blends rural values and urban sensibilities to navigate—and sometimes sanitize—the post-civil rights South."

In less than 200 pages, Robinson expertly navigates the multiple identities available to Memphis and her people, and in doing so she illustrates a central point of the book: "the geographic and cognitive epicenter of American blackness [is] shift[ing] southward."

The book is part ethnography, part cultural studies, and part Southern Studies, and the attention it pays to each can be somewhat distracting. The rich ethnographic interviews come in the second half of the book and seem somewhat out of place next to the more technical explanations of how popular culture shaped notions of the South (Chapter 1) or discussions of the "physical and ideological landscape of the city" in its transformation from city to region in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Chapter 2). Chapters 3, 4, and 5, respectively, deal with the intersection of regional identity with race, class, and gender. Chapter 3, "Not Stud'n' 'em White Folks," is by far the most effective chapter; howev-

er, it is only made possible by the analysis that precedes it and the discussion that follows, so what this reviewer terms “distracting” may indeed be a necessary condition precedent. *This Ain’t Chicago* disinters important racial logics blacks employ to combat multiple forms of racism. One of those racial logics is evidenced in the title to Chapter 3 (discussed above). According to Robinson, to “not study white folks” is a way to simultaneously not be surprised by white racism or to be hurt by it. In this respect, this racial logic allows blacks to transcend racism (not being upset or disappointed by racist acts); however, Robinson is careful to point out that, while liberating, this stance is also a carefully crafted protective veneer, which comes at a cost.

Too often, discussions of black America focus on urban spaces in the U.S. North. While Memphis “ain’t Chicago” (a refrain Robinson heard over and over again as she returned home from graduate studies at Northwestern University to interview African American residents of Memphis), the book paints a vivid picture of an agentic black community located in the “post-soul” South. Robinson not only gives voice to her respondents, she privileges their voices, which come across poignantly through the colloquialisms they employ and what can often be described as their performance of race. In outlining her respondents’ reactions to racist acts (overt and otherwise) the African American respondents of Memphis become a sort of everyman or everywoman. In this respect one thing becomes clear, Memphis *Ain’t Chicago*, but it could be . . . or any other soul city in the U.S. for that matter.

Barbara Combs

enlightening the community with talks about the religious and cultural history of the South.”

In the beginning, Wilson’s job was managing editor of the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*. The National Endowment for the Humanities gave the university a grant to fund the project. He calls his work on the *Encyclopedia* his biggest accomplishment, and something he is proud of, because he now understands the demands of such a project. “It is a real collaborative project involving so many of us at the Center and hundreds of scholars across the nation and the world as well. It’s a big management project, a big intellectual project to figure out the issues involved in producing a reference work about the South,” Wilson says.

On January 26, 1983, he spoke about Robert E. Lee and other Southern heroes who at their deaths were honored with elaborate funeral processions and mourned throughout the region. Answering an audience question about the next Southern hero likely to receive such acclaim, Wilson predicted Bear Bryant. Later that day, when news broke of Bryant’s death, students and colleagues began referring to Wilson as “Dr. Death,” a moniker that has stuck. The nationally acclaimed publication of the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* in 1989 earned him a second epithet—the “Diderot of Dixie.”

He served as director of the Southern Studies academic program from 1991 to 1998 and director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture from 1998 to 2007. As director of the Center, Wilson played important roles in helping establish the Southern Foodways Alliance and the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation, and he continued to receive accolades as a teacher and a scholar, including the 2010 Distinguished Research and Creative Achievement Award.

Wilson’s first book, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865–1920*, helped bring the concept of civil religion into Southern Studies scholarship and was the first book to address the topic of how white Southerners came to remember the Civil War as a kind of religious effort. The University of

Georgia Press published a new edition of *Baptized in Blood* in 2009. Historians continue to use the book to understand the meanings and memories of the Civil War. In 1995 Wilson published a collection of closely related essays, *Judgment and Grace in Dixie: Southern Faiths from Faulkner to Elvis*, and in 2011 he published *Flashes of a Southern Spirit: Meanings of the Spirit in the U.S. South*. All three of those works show his expertise in Southern religious history, a topic Wilson taught in numerous undergraduate and graduate classes. “I have been proud of my scholarly career working on issues of Southern culture and religion, and I have also been very proud of working with students.” Wilson also edited or coedited *Religion in the South*, *The Encyclopedia of Religion in the South*, *Religion and the American Civil War*, *The South and the Caribbean*, the Religion by Region series, and the New Directions in Southern Culture series for the University of North Carolina Press.

Despite the fact that he says one of the things he learned from the first encyclopedia was never to do another one, at the beginning of the 2000s Wilson and colleagues at the Center and the University of North Carolina Press decided a *New Encyclopedia* should be published, in 24 volumes. “It was a bit daunting when we first started, but looking back on it, that was a great decision, enabling us to expand the scope of the original *Encyclopedia*, update everything and add new articles, and really make it an *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* for the 21st century, raising a lot of the issues that have come out of the explosion of scholarship in Southern Studies in the last 15 years or so,” says Wilson. “I was extremely lucky to work with Jimmy Thomas, who has been the managing editor of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* and who is such a wonderful scholar, writer, and editor. He was a pleasure to work with on that project.”

Thomas says Reagan is an incredibly generous person and scholar. “Working with Charles Reagan Wilson is always such a rewarding experience—both intellectually and personally. Looking back, I was a Southern Studies neophyte when he and Ann Abadie brought me to the Center to work

on *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, but from day one he treated me as a colleague. I am indebted to him in countless and immeasurable ways," says Thomas.

Wilson has an extraordinary record as an adviser of graduate work. He has directed more than 20 dissertations in history and well over 100 MA theses in Southern Studies and history, and he has served on, as described by Center director Ted Ownby, "too many thesis committees to count."

"The encyclopedia work Charles has done really contributes to his teaching, because it means he is interested in everything. Charles has a great talent for listening to what students say about their interests and then finding the best ways to help them turn those interests into scholarly projects," Ownby says.

The best part about teaching, Wilson says, is to be able to do so at a place with such a storied history and with students who have a Faulknerian love-hate relationship with this place. He has worked with students to figure out specific ways of engaging the South through their own research. "I have been so fortunate to be able to think about the South and to talk to visiting scholars, researchers, lecturers, and students, and to think about the South from the perspective of the University of Mississippi and the state of Mississippi," Wilson says. "There has been such a diversity of material that I have been able to work on with the students. In Southern Studies for example, we have students who come from backgrounds and interests in history and literature and art, folk art, music, politics, religion, just such a variety of things. All of us who teach Southern Studies have to deal with a variety of student topics and interests, and it broadens us so much. Working with students always challenges me because of their variety of interests."

Wilson didn't start out as a historian, though. He entered college at Texas Tech because he wanted to be a sports reporter. He was sports editor of his high school newspaper, and he then worked on the college paper and covered sports for the *El Paso Times*. "I covered Texas high school football, so what could be better than that?" he laughs. "I went to college thinking I would be a



Tom Rankin

journalist, but I took the required history courses and found I liked them and that I was good at it, and got more and more interested in history."

During his time at the University of Texas at Austin in the 1970s for his doctoral degree, Wilson realized Austin was an interesting place to be studying the South. "In many ways Austin is a distinctive, unique city, and it is always problematic to talk about Texas as a Southern state," he says. "But I had that same kind of love-hate relationship with the South in the '60s and '70s that many of our students in Southern Studies have always had, so I got more engaged with wanting to understand the complexity of the South, particularly how important religion was for understanding Southern history and Southern culture."

Wilson was also interested in how religion related to the issues of race, gender, and social class, and wanted to look beyond the stereotypes of the South. "History became a way for me to think about and research particular topics that would help to illuminate the complexity of the South," Wilson says.

One of the people who influenced Wilson was his dissertation adviser at the University of Texas, William Goetzmann, a 1967 Pulitzer Prize winner in history. "He was one of the most brilliant men I ever knew. He challenged me, and he was a true mentor. I studied his books in graduate school to see how he put together a chapter and how he put together an argument," Wilson says.

Religious historian Samuel Hill also influenced Wilson. "He was a scholarly father figure, because he was the

first modern scholar of religion in the South. He helped me to imagine what studying religion in the South could be. He also is a very kind man and a kind of figure of what the scholar-intellectual could be, and that is always something I wanted to represent."

Once retired, Wilson will focus on two writing projects. "After retirement this spring he will complete his books on the Southern way of life, the Southern way of death, and other topics," Abadie says. "He will have time to enjoy other names he has earned, including Distinguished Professor, Witty Raconteur, Gourmet Cook, Charming Host, Superb Guest, and Dear Friend. I wish him well."

Besides writing and researching for *The Southern Way of Life* and a short cultural history of the South, Wilson will be traveling more, spending time in his garden, and experimenting more in the kitchen. "People don't know that professors cook, but I love food, and I love to cook," he says. "My wife and I each have our own dishes, and part of our daily routine is to cook together in the evening. That is an important part of our relationship."

One thing Wilson will not miss is grading papers. "I have always enjoyed being a teacher, but I have always wanted the time to research and write history, so I am looking forward to having the full time and concentration to do that," he says. "One of the things I have always liked about university life is that it has a beginning and an end. It has seasons in terms of semesters, and you get closure on a class and then you can start fresh. You have young people coming and going, and young people always keep you vibrant and alert."

One of Wilson's last duties as university professor was to deliver the University of Mississippi Mortar Board Last Lecture, the final lecture of 2014–15. Delivered on May 2 in the Gertrude Ford Center for the Performing Arts, the lecture was titled "Whose South? Lessons from Studying the South at the University of Mississippi." The entire lecture is available to view on the Center's website at southernstudies.olemiss.edu.

Rebecca Lauck Cleary

Remembering Summer 1982 . . .

Profile

Wilson Heads Encyclopedia

by Sue Shippy

Charles Wilson comes from a long line of Southerners, but he never really thought of himself in those terms.

"I've always considered myself more of a suburbanite actually," Wilson said with a smile. 'Of course that's changed now that I've come to Mississippi. It's hard *not* to think Southern in Mississippi."

Wilson was named recently to a joint appointment at the University as assistant professor of History and co-editor of the Center's upcoming *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*. As co-editor, Wilson is coordinating the work of 24 senior consultants and hundreds of contributing writers to the encyclopedia. This illustrated reference book will examine the traits that have made the South distinctive in such areas as music, religion, literature, the arts, black life, race relations, oral lore, education, linguistic patterns, folklife, food, women and family, to name just a few. The publication will be a resource tool for scholars and general readers alike. All material in the encyclopedia will be written by noted authorities in each field.

"This landmark work will help pinpoint those qualities that make the South unique and make available comprehensive information about the region," Wilson said.

The Center's director, Bill Ferris, is the other co-editor of the encyclopedia and will have administrative and oversight responsibilities.

Before coming to the University, Wilson was a visiting professor of History at Texas Tech University at Lubbock. He also spent two years as an assistant instructor at the University of Texas at El Paso. Before that, he spent a year at the University of Wurzburg in West Germany teaching German students about American culture.

"I introduced an informal course that met at different pubs each week," Wilson said. "One of my lectures was titled, 'From Beer to Fraternity: The Life of the College Student.' I thought a pub was a rather appropriate setting for that particular discussion."

Wilson completed his undergraduate and master's degrees at the University of Texas at El Paso and his Ph.D. at the University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920*, and many journal articles.

Besides working with the encyclopedia, Wilson also teaches a survey course in American History and is conducting research for his next book on the Southern way of death. Southerners regard death



Charles Wilson

differently, Wilson says. For example, there are more open casket funerals in this region. In his research, Wilson is examining attitudes, customs, cemeteries and other ways in which Southerners respond to death.

Wilson works out of the Center's offices in Barnard Observatory and is one of the most recent additions to the Center staff. He joins eight other full-time staff members working on a variety of Center programs.

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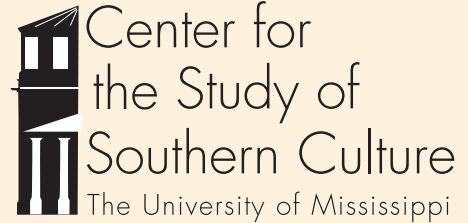
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