

## The 22nd Oxford Conference for the Book, March 25–27, 2015

The 22nd Oxford Conference for the Book (OCB), presented by the Center and Square Books, will take place March 25–27, 2015, in Oxford and on the University of Mississippi campus. The program, which is free and open to the public, includes readings, panel discussions, and talks by dozens of talented writers from across the nation. This year, Friday's panels and readings will take place in the historic Lafayette County courthouse on the Oxford Square. Wednesday's and Thursday's events will happen at the Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics and in the J. D. Williams Library on the UM campus.

This year's conference is dedicated to Mississippi writer Margaret Walker, who penned the critically acclaimed novel *Jubilee* and the award-winning poetry collection *For My People*. Distinguished professor and author of *Fields Watered with Blood: Critical Essays on Margaret Walker*, Maryemma Graham, will give the keynote address, and a panel of Walker scholars, including Graham, Robby Luckett, Carolyn J. Brown, and Jerry W. Ward, will follow. Conference panels will explore a range of topics, including sports and race, writing with pictures, writing for television, heritage foods and foodways of the South, 21st-century American wars, and the life of Elvis Presley.

PRESENTED BY  
The Center for the  
Study of Southern Culture  
& Square Books

THE 22ND  
**OXFORD**  
Conference  
for the Book  
Dedicated to Mississippi Writer  
Margaret Walker

www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com

March 25–27, 2015  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI  
OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI

Sponsored by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, Square Books, Southern Documentary Project, Southern Foodways Alliance, Living Above, Lafayette County Literacy Council, Department of English, Department of History, J. D. Williams Library, Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics, African American Studies Program, Sally McRonnell Burkhardt Honors College, John and Benita Graham Visiting Writers Fund, Junior Auxiliary of Oxford, Lafayette County & Oxford Public Library, Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance, and Southern Literary Trail.  
The conference is partially funded by the University of Mississippi, a contribution from the FRB Feder Foundation for the Beaux Arts, grants from the Mississippi Arts Commission and the Mississippi Humanities Council, and promotional support from Visit Oxford.

Square Books will present several sessions of readings by both well-known and up-and-coming writers currently on book tour. This year's writers include National Book Award-winner Phil Klay, LaShonda Katrice Barnett, Kent Russell, Curtis Wilkie, David Maraniss, Andrew Maraniss, Jody Hill, Kyle Veazey, Jack Pendarvis, Kent Osborne, Seo Kim, Natasha Allegri, Chiyuma Elliot, Geoffrey Davis, Douglas Brown, Caroline Randall Williams, John Renehan, Beth Ann Fennelly, Chelsea Wagenaar, Mark Wagenaar, Barbara Ras, David Shields, Sean Brock, David Simon, Tim Johnston, David Vann, Skip Horack, Susan Ferber, Peter Guralnick, Preston Lauterbach, and Ted Ownby.

*Thacker Mountain Radio* will have a special OCB show at the Lyric Theater on the Oxford Square at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 26. Kent Russell, David Vann, and Preston Lauterbach will all appear on the show.

Square Books will host book signings each evening for the authors presenting that day. The Wednesday and Friday signings will be at Off Square Books, and the Thursday signing will be at the Lyric Theater, before and after *Thacker Mountain Radio*.

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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Martin Luther King Jr. ended his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" with the phrase "Yours for the cause of peace and brotherhood."

Every day we learn about more acts of violence, with all sorts of causes, technologies, and consequences. The horrific story of a woman burned in Mississippi leaves the news only because of the next horrific story in another place. And the next, and the next.

No matter how obvious or how potentially naïve it may seem, I find myself thinking a great deal about peace. And this, in my roles as a Southern Studies professor and administrator, leads to a question that may not be obvious at all. Might there be a Southern form of peace studies? Peace and conflict resolution studies is an active field of scholarship, teaching, and engagement. A quick Internet search found more than 200 such programs in the US and Canada. But regional studies scholars, as far as I know, have not done a great deal to study the concept. Could we study peace in the South?

The question of a Southern form of peace studies might seem ridiculous because there has been so much support for physical force in a region with exceptionally high rates of personal violence, with histories of lynching and other racist violence, with support for gun ownership, capital punishment, stand-your-ground laws, and high military spending. But that history might make studying the South so interesting, because efforts to make peace very often respond to specific forms of violence. To make the same point more directly, maybe the South needs more peace studies.

So, what can we do? We can teach a Southern Studies course in Fall 2015 on Peace and the American South. We'll invite specialists in reconciliation, security studies, political science, religious studies, and other fields to join us. We'll see where the topic leads.

Simply studying the people who have used the word *peace* poses its own potential complications, because some people who talk about peace are imagining an orderly world without dissent. For example, in *The People and Their Peace* historian Laura Edwards describes how people in the early 1800s Carolinas understood "the peace," an old English concept of localized law enforcement that opposed violence and other disorder and expected people to stay within accepted roles. In another use of the term, Civil War-era supporters of the Peace Party in Southern states, primarily North Carolina, wanted a negotiated peace to preserve their honor and the institution of slavery. And Martin Luther King's call for peace and brotherhood had a degree of irony, calling for peace in a letter he addressed to white clergymen who had asked him to slow activist efforts down, in effect calling on him to be more orderly (or peaceful) in order to be less controversial.

There are lots of arguments about peace. Many say peace only comes with justice, and with more thorough and honest communication about conflicts past and present. Some say it comes with economic development. Some say peace comes with clear rules and powerful forms of enforcement. Some say it comes from within the individual, and/or as part of religious experience and expression. We'll study various arguments, and we will ask when and how peace enters the discussion. We'll read King's "Letter" and Edwards's book and works on Southerners and diplomacy and Southern pacifists and antilynching efforts. We'll study the Black Lives Matter movement. We'll ask how individual, family, and local efforts for peace might be part of national and global efforts. We'll study art and music that says, for instance, "Ain't gonna study war no more," or "Eat a peach for peace," or "Let's all get together / Bring peace to the world." And when we find people raising objections that certain claims about peace are naïve or one-sided or unworkable, we'll study the objections.

So, come join us. As B. B. King says, let's all get together.

Ted Ownby

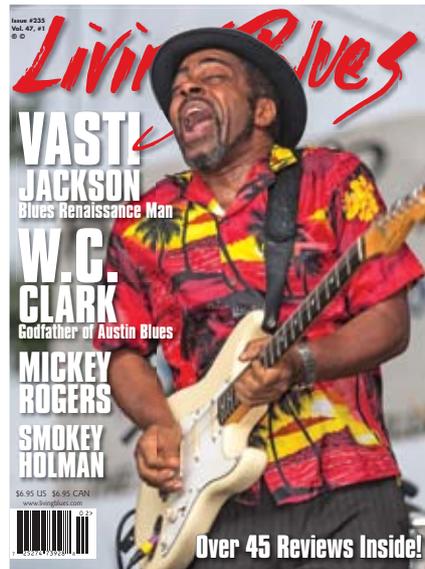
# Living Blues News

It has been a rough winter in the blues world. Unfortunately, my obituary list has more than 30 entries on it. We'll get to them all, but it will take some time. Thanks to all my writers from across the country who have stepped up to write them. It is often a difficult task when you had a personal relationship with the artist.

For me, it is Ms. Alberta—Alberta Adams. Ms. Alberta was the oldest living blues performer when she died on December 24. And she *was* still a performer. She was singing just a few months ago at age 97. She was nearly deaf, so she couldn't hear the band, but she was still belting it out. They just needed to follow along.

My wife and I drove to Detroit in May 2001 to interview Ms. Alberta for the cover of *LB* #160. As is always the case, I prefer to interview artists in their own home. I feel like you get a deeper, more personal interview that way, and you also get a chance to see the mementoes of their career that really mean something to them. Often these items spark talk that would have otherwise not happened. Adams lived in an old neighborhood in the heart of Detroit—a neighborhood that had crumbled and wasted away around her. She had purchased the house in 1959, but 43 years later it was one of the few left standing that wasn't a crack house or a burned-out shell.

I am a country boy. We live in a town in Mississippi that has more cows than people, so my big-city experiences are limited. But there is no doubt in my mind that this was one of the roughest neighborhoods I had ever been in. This was before cell phones and GPS navigation, so we had to find the place. When we finally pulled up in front of the old house, a young man came to the car and asked if we were there to see Ms. Alberta. It wasn't too hard to determine that was who we were. Not a lot of minivans with white couples



drive down that street. I got my stuff together, and we followed the young man up a back stairway through locked gate, after locked door, after locked door, until we finally entered Adams's little home on the second floor. The young man left, and she said, "Don't worry, someone will be watching your car while you are here. Come on in, and sit down!" We sat and proceeded to have a nearly two-hour discussion covering her lengthy career and the world she had lived in. Adams was 85 at the time but had the spunk of a youngster. She was delightful, charming, and endearing. Her stories of early theater shows, shake dancers, snake dancers, Chess Records, Hastings Street, Louis Jordan, and others were mesmerizing. When we finally wrapped up, Alberta Adams had yet another lifelong fan.

One of her sons took us back downstairs, and sure enough, when we stepped outside there was the same young man sitting on the front steps watching our car.

R. J. Spangler, Adams's longtime friend and drummer, had contacted me a few weeks before she died, and we were planning on doing something special to celebrate her 98th

birthday. But on Christmas Day, he wrote me again to say Ms. Alberta had died during the night. A little piece of my blues world died too.



This issue's cover story is on McComb, Mississippi, native Vasti Jackson. He is a real blues Renaissance man—skilled at nearly every facet of the music industry. Jackson is a guitarist (electric and acoustic), vocalist, songwriter, actor, educator, frontman, sideman, bandleader, arranger, session musician, label owner, and producer. He can focus like a laser and knows how to get the job done no matter what is placed in front of him. Jackson sat down with *LB* this summer for his first full feature with us.



W. C. Clark is affectionately known as the "Godfather of Austin Blues," a name he earned through decades of playing and mentoring in the Austin music scene. Clark is perhaps best known for the group of young teenagers and twenty-somethings he worked with back in Austin in the late 1970s. Musicians Lou Ann Barton, Angela Shrehli, and brothers Jimmie and Stevie Ray Vaughan all worked with Clark and learned from him. Perhaps his greatest influence was on the young Stevie Ray Vaughan, who asked Clark to join his band in the late 1970s. Our feature includes some never-before-published photos from this time period with the young guitar phenom still cutting his teeth.

Don't forget the 2015 *Living Blues* Blues Today Symposium will be held on April 9, 2015, at the University of Mississippi. More information can be found at [www.livingblues.com](http://www.livingblues.com).

Brett J. Bonner

**FEBRUARY**

4 “Did Johnny Come Marching Home? The Role of African Americans in the Civil War”  
Wilma E. Mosley-Clopton, Oral Historian  
Mississippi Humanities Council

11 “I’m a Southern, Farm Girl, Union, Democrat Feminist’: Finding Feminism in the American South”  
Jessica Wilkerson, Assistant Professor of History and Southern Studies

18 “Southern Biographies since the 1980s”  
Charles Reagan Wilson, Professor Emeritus of History and Southern Studies  
Ted Ownby, Director, Center for the Study of Southern Culture, and Professor of History

25 “Slavery by Another Name”  
April Grayson, Project Manager  
William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation

**MARCH**

4 “Southern Lesbian-Feminist Herstory, 1968–1994: Sinister Wisdom; A Multicultural Lesbian Literary and Art Journal”  
Jaime Harker, Interim Director, Isom Center, and Associate Professor of English



**Brown Bag Lunch and Lecture Series  
SPRING SEMESTER 2015**

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

11 **SPRING BREAK**

18 “Mississippi Byways Research Project: Discovering and Documenting the State’s Artists”  
Beth Batton  
National Endowment for the Arts Fellow, Mississippi Byways Research Project  
Mississippi Museum of Art

25 “Doublespeak and Southern Ladies: Class and Femininity in Contemporary Southern Pop Culture”  
Kaitlin Vogt, Southern Studies Graduate Student

**APRIL**

1 “Dwelling in the Annals: A Discussion on Black South Carolinian Poets’ Meditation on Place, Identity, and South Carolina History”  
Purvis Cornish, Southern Studies Graduate Student

8 “Studying and Documenting the Blues at the University of Mississippi”  
Scott Baretta, Mark Camarigg, Greg Johnson  
University of Mississippi

15 SouthDocs: Spring Screening  
Andy Harper, Director, Southern Documentary Project

22 “My Art Is Evidence of My Freedom:’ The Body, Memory, and History in African American and Black British Art”  
Celeste-Marie Bernier, Professor of African American Studies  
University of Memphis

29 “At the Habana Hilton, 1958: Photos from the Keating Collection”  
A Gammill Gallery Exhibition  
Lecture  
Lauren Holt, Southern Studies Graduate Student

lynn & stewart

Gammill



Gallery

**Exhibition Schedule**

February 2–April 2, 2015  
*Through the Lens of an Antique Camera*  
Euphus Ruth Jr.  
Mississippi Delta

April 3–April 30, 2015  
*Photographs of the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi, 1961–1968*  
Jim Lucas

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

# Through the Lens of an Antique Camera

## Wet Plate Collodion Photography to Be Exhibited in Gammill Gallery Photographs by Euphus Ruth Jr.

Euphus Ruth Jr. was born in Texas but from the age of two he was raised in Bruce, Mississippi. He has lived in the Mississippi Delta for more than 30 years. He photographs using the wet collodion and film processes, and says he enjoys the complete photographic process, from visualizing the image through the ground glass to the final print or plate in the darkroom or mobile darkbox.

“My love of black and white photography began,” he said, “by looking at old photos from my mom’s Kodak

pyroxylin in alcohol and ether). This mixture is poured on a cleaned glass plate, which is allowed to sit until the coating gels but is still moist. The plate is then placed in a silver nitrate solution, which converts the iodide, bromide, or chloride to silver iodide, silver bromide, or silver chloride. Once the action is complete, Ruth removes the plate from the silver nitrate solution and exposes it in a camera while still wet. The plate loses sensitivity as it dries, requiring him to coat and sensitize the plate immediately before use.



*The Facts Themselves Loom*

It must also be developed while still moist, using a solution of iron sulfate, acetic acid, and alcohol in water.

The sensitivity of silver halides to light is the underlying principle behind most types of 19th-century photographic processes—daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes, calotypes that use paper negatives, and wet and dry plate processes.

The exhibition of Ruth’s work, *Through the Lens of an Antique Camera*, will be on display in Gammill Gallery from February 2 to April 2. An artist’s reception is scheduled for February 26.

*The Ghost of E. E. Bass*



Brownie, which was kept in a box under the couch of our family home. I’m inspired by olden, forgotten, or remembered things and am intrigued by the earth’s reclamation, be it human or material. Most of my images since 2006 are made with wooden view cameras with antique and modern lenses, practicing the 19th-century wet collodion process. In my earlier work I used large-format film contact printed on Azo paper. I’m currently making wet collodion glass negatives for contact printing.”

Ruth claims that Frederick Scott Archer introduced the wet plate process—sometimes referred to as the collodion process, after the carrier material it uses—in 1851. His process involves dissolving a bromide, iodide, or chloride in collodion (a solution of

*Assumption’s Way*



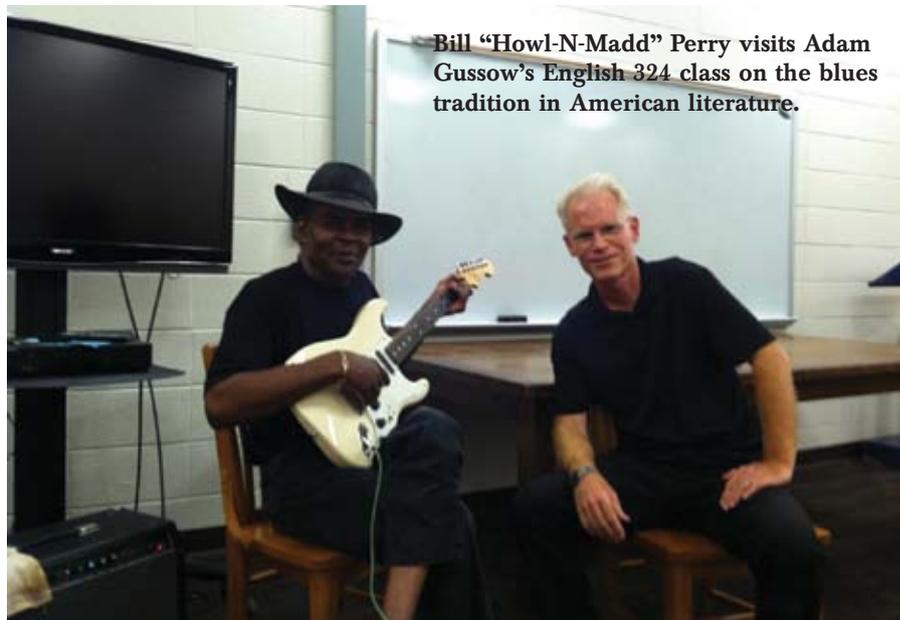
# Blues in the Academy

## The University of Mississippi and the Center Continue to Be the Place to Study the Blues

A Southern Studies program class description from Fall 1984 encouraged students to “Study the Land That Gave Birth to the Blues.” Since then, the Center for the Study of Southern Culture and the University of Mississippi have continued to be the foremost institution for blues scholarship. With the Blues Archive, *Living Blues* magazine, *Highway 61 Radio*, undergraduate and graduate courses taught on the subject, new blues-topics films being created, and annual conferences and symposia on blues and blues culture, the Center is a prime location to study and explore this iconic Southern music and culture.

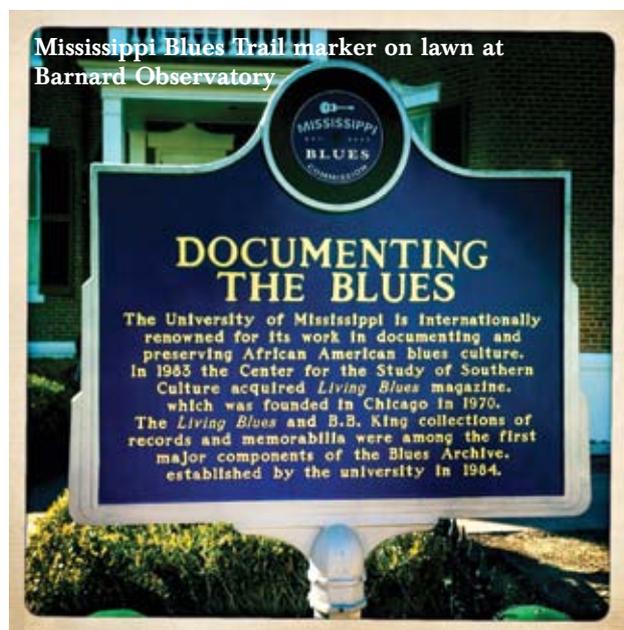
Southern Studies students studying one aspect of blues culture or another—whether for assigned readings or independent research for a thesis or paper—often find their way to the Blues Archive in the J. D. Williams Library early on.

“We’ve even had Southern Studies students over simply to listen to some recordings on vinyl that they can’t easily find elsewhere,” said Greg Johnson, blues curator and associate professor in Archives and Special Collections. “Several faculty and staff have conducted research here for various projects. The Blues Archive also partnered with Southern Studies and the Library of Congress for the Field School for Cultural Documentation: North Mississippi Music Project.” That project includes oral histories from musicians in and just outside



Bill “Howl-N-Madd” Perry visits Adam Gussow’s English 324 class on the blues tradition in American literature.

COURTESY ADAM GUSSOW



Mississippi Blues Trail marker on lawn at Barnard Observatory

JIMMY THOMAS

perusing the collection, as international visitors come to the archive to comb through B. B. King’s personal record collection, the Jim O’Neal and Amy van Singel/*Living Blues* Collection, the Trumpet Records Collection, the Sheldon Harris Collection, the John Richbourg Collection, and the Percy Mayfield collection.

“During the summer months, at the peak of blues festival season, we get a lot of blues fans from Germany, Denmark, France, Japan, South Korea, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Norway, and other countries,” Johnson said. “Some are stopping in to do research, while others just want to see cool materials unavailable elsewhere.”

Footage from the collections has been used in the *Martin Scorsese Presents: The Blues* series for PBS. Former Rolling Stones’ bassist Bill Wyman conducted research here for his *Blues Odyssey* book and DVD, and Ted Gioia spent time there working on his book *Delta Blues*. Southern Studies alum Preston Lauterbach

Oxford, representing a sampling of the large number of performers and musical styles from this area.

Johnson said students from across many disciplines use the collection as well, from music, history, and even accounting and business.

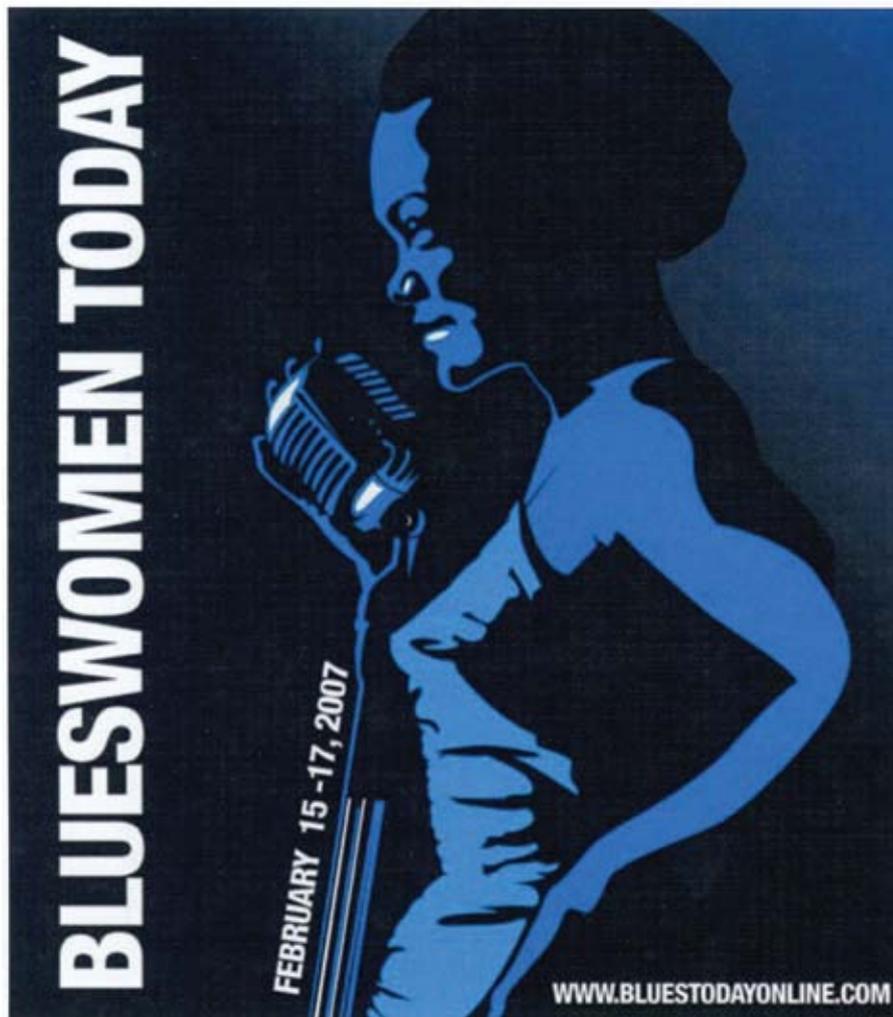
Local faces aren’t the only ones

used the archive in writing *The Chitlin' Circuit and the Road to Rock 'n' Roll*.

Most recently, earlier this semester, the director of *Teen Wolf* conducted research in the Archive, while working on a documentary of Nashville disc jockey John Richbourg, whose collection is housed there.

In order for students to learn about the blues, their professors must be well versed in its traditions. In the English Department, Derrick Harriell, assistant professor of English and African American studies, focuses his teaching interests on blues poetry and Harlem Renaissance literature.

"Blues is the music and culture of the people, which is why it functions as the underpinnings in my writing as well as my approach to the classroom," Harriell said. "I've always preferred to identify myself as more moderator than teacher; therefore, I'm interested in my classrooms having the sort of call-and-response interaction that is so prevalent in blues performance. I'm fortunate to work at a university and live in a town where the blues is privileged, and I often incorporate the resources of



the blues archive and or the knowledge of its genius curator Greg Johnson."

As associate professor of English and Southern Studies,

Adam Gussow incorporates blues scholarship in his classes, specifically SST 598, ENGL 692, and ENGL 324, which he taught last fall. The first course has the rubric "Robert Johnson, the Devil's Music, and the Blues," a direct outgrowth of his book project. His project offers a series of explorations into the role played by the devil figure within an evolving blues tradition, and Gussow said the book is complete and in the revision stage now.

He also teaches graduate and undergraduate versions of a course on

the blues literary and cultural tradition that he has been teaching since 1998—first at the New School and at Vassar College, then multiple times at UM. "The last time I taught the undergrad version here, in Fall 2012, I brought Bill 'Howl-N-Madd' Perry and Mark 'Muleman' Massy to my class on separate occasions," he said. "The last time I taught the grad version, in Fall 2013, I brought in Leo 'Bud' Welch. I like to think I'm following in the tradition established by Bill Ferris, who used to invite blues musicians into his classroom."

An unexpected outgrowth of Gussow's academic teaching about the blues is a 12-video series of lectures that he improvised over a two-week period in December 2012, titled *Blues Talk*, available online, where Gussow said, "The blues tradition isn't just about the music. It's about powerful and often conflicted feelings that circulate within the

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BLUES ARCHIVE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI



A 78 r.p.m. recording of bluesman Robert Johnson's "Me and the Devil Blues," housed in the UM Blues Archive

music, sourcing it decisively (many have argued) in the historical struggles of African Americans to achieve full personhood on American soil.”

Whether it’s for his classes or for research, Gussow also uses the Blues Archive in a range of ways. “I greatly benefit from knowing that they’ve got pretty much every book ever published about the blues, so I can always pop over there if there’s something I don’t have,” he said. “They have got a matchless set of blues periodicals, too. When I needed to see the original version of *Blues Unlimited* with Pete Welding’s interview article about Son House, with the famous ‘He must have sold his soul to the devil to play like that’ quote about Robert Johnson, I was able to set eyes on it there. And Greg Johnson is always extremely helpful when I’ve got a specific research question.”

Listening to the blues is another important aspect, and Scott Barretta’s *Highway 61 Radio*, which airs Saturday nights at 11:00 p.m. and again on Sunday at 6:00 p.m.

on Mississippi Public Broadcasting, delivers the best in blues music and culture from the past, present, and future. Center founding director Bill Ferris, long known as “the Blues Doctor,” previously hosted the show, beginning in the mid-1980s.

With in-depth features on blues icons as well as more obscure artists and rising stars, *Living Blues* magazine, edited by Brett Bonner, has provided the best in blues journalism and photography for more than 40 years. The magazine was acquired by the Center in 1983. Bonner works with Southern Studies graduate students as interns, and many of those students, like Melanie Young and Camilla Aikin, have gone on to write for the magazine.

The Blues Today Symposium offers a way to introduce new trends in blues scholarship, reconsider past works, and engage in dialogue with contemporary blues artists. Sponsored by *Living Blues* since 2003, the symposium has featured a notable lineup of musicians participating

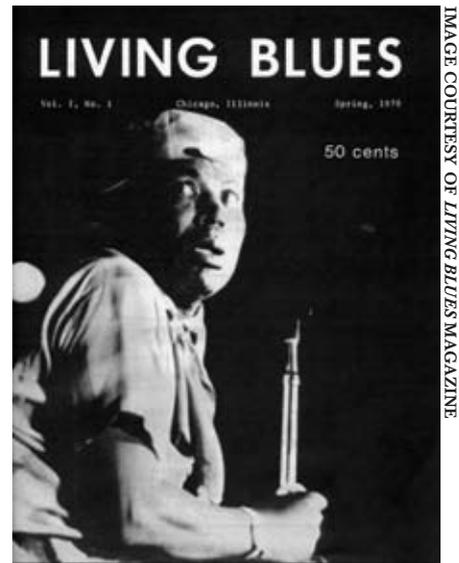


IMAGE COURTESY OF LIVING BLUES MAGAZINE

The cover of the first issue of *Living Blues* magazine

in the symposium, including Little Milton, Bobby Rush, Mavis Staples, Honeyboy Edwards, and B. B. King. Past keynote presentations have featured scholars Paul Oliver, Sam Charters, Stanley Crouch, Bill Ferris, and others.

“This year we’re excited to present David Evans, author of the influential *Big Road Blues*,” said Mark Camarigg, publications manager for *Living Blues*. “Evans is an expert on North Mississippi blues, and his talk should illuminate and contextualize blues culture in this very distinct region.”

*Living Blues* also partnered with Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois, a few years ago, and now the magazine co-organizes their Blues and the Spirit Conference every other year. This provides an opportunity to tap the rich history of Chicago blues culture. “We’re exploring the possibility of taking our format to other universities or forums where we can focus on the blues traditions of a particular region or city, like New Orleans, St. Louis, or Memphis,” Camarigg said. “There’s simply a natural curiosity in people wanting to understand and appreciate local history and culture.”

Rebecca Lauck Cleary



IMAGE COURTESY OF GREG JOHNSON

Blues archivist Greg Johnson at his desk in the Blues Archive

# Blues Today Symposium to Be Held on April 9, 2015

The 2015 Blues Today Symposium will be Thursday, April 9, 2015, at the University of Mississippi. The program's theme, North Mississippi Hill Country Blues, will focus on the region's distinctive blues sound and culture. David Evans, director of the ethnomusicology and regional studies doctoral program of the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music at the University of Memphis, will deliver the keynote address. Evans is a specialist in American folk and popular music, particularly blues, spirituals, gospel, and African American folk music. Additionally, George W. K. Dor, the McDonnell-Barksdale Chair of Ethnomusicology and associate professor of music at the University of Mississippi, will discuss Africanisms in Otha Tuner's fife and band music.

Other presentations include filmmakers Joe York and Scott Barretta previewing portions of their upcoming documentary feature film on Como, Mississippi's legendary blues artist Fred McDowell. Greg Johnson, curator for the Blues Archive in the Department of Archives and Special Collections at the University of Mississippi, will highlight holdings in the archive, featuring numerous North Mississippi blues musicians.

The Blues Today Symposium is presented by *Living Blues* magazine and the Center for the Study of Southern Culture. The symposium coincides with Clarksdale, Mississippi's annual Juke Joint Festival (April 10–12) providing attendees an opportunity to see and hear dozens of musicians from the region.

Program updates will be posted at <http://southernstudies.olemiss.edu/events/music-of-the-south/>.



North Mississippi Hill Country bluesman Mississippi Fred McDowell, the subject of a forthcoming documentary by Joe York and Scott Barretta

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BLUES ARCHIVE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI



## Schedule of Events

All presentations except for *Thacker Mountain Radio* will occur in the Faulkner Room of the Department of Archives and Special Collections on the third floor of the J. D. Williams Library.

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 9:00 a.m.  | “Archiving the North Mississippi Blues”<br>Greg Johnson   |
| 10:00 a.m. | “Exploring Africanisms in Otha Tuner’s Fife and Band Music as Recorded by Alan Lomax”<br>George W. K. Dor   |
| 11:00 a.m. | <i>Study the South</i> paper presentation: “The Lynching Blues: Robert Johnson’s ‘Hellhound on My Trail’ as Antilynching Performance”<br>Karlos K. Hill |
| noon       | Lunch on your own   |
| 1:00 p.m.  | Keynote Lecture<br>David Evans  |
| 2:30 p.m.  | “Documenting the Life of Mississippi Fred McDowell”<br>Discussion and Preview with Filmmakers<br>Joe York and Scott Barretta                            |
| 4:00 p.m.  | “Contemporary Hill Country Blues Culture”<br>Alice Pierotti   |
| 6:00 p.m.  | <i>Thacker Mountain Radio</i> program<br>Oxford Square  |

## Music of the South Concert Series Continues with Rory Block

Heralded as “a living landmark” (*Berkeley Express*), “a national treasure” (*Guitar Extra*), and “one of the greatest living acoustic blues artists” (*Blues Revue*), Rory Block has committed her

life and her career to preserving the Delta blues tradition and bringing it to life for 21st-century audiences around the world.

A traditionalist and an innovator at

the same time, she wields a fiery and haunting guitar and vocal style that redefines the boundaries of acoustic blues and folk. The *New York Times* declared, “Her playing is perfect, her singing otherworldly as she wrestles with ghosts, shadows, and legends.”

On Monday, February 23, Rory Block will appear on the University of Mississippi campus at the Gertrude C. Ford Performing Arts Center. Showtime is 7:30, and tickets are \$25.

Begun in the fall of 2012, the Music of the South Concert Series is a partnership of the Gertrude C. Ford Performing Arts Center and the Center for the Study of Southern Culture. The series highlights intimate evenings with Southern performers. Folksinger Caroline Herring gave the inaugural performance in October 2012, and other performers on the series include Randall Bramblett, Valerie June, Jerron “Blind Boy” Paxton, Southern Studies MA alumnus and member of the band Widespread Panic John “JoJo” Hermann, Tyler Keith, Amy Andrews, Lee Bains III, and the bands Water Liars and Feufollet.

Rory Block



Mrs. Velma Moore of Benoit, Mississippi

## *Delta Jewels: In Search of My Grandmother's Wisdom*

**A Gammill Gallery Exhibition  
by Alysia Burton Steele**

Photography by Alysia Steele, assistant professor in the University of Mississippi Meek School of Journalism and New Media, was exhibited in the Gammill Gallery from November 3 to January 31.

In her artist's statement, Steele says, “The project was inspired by memories of my beloved grandmother Althenia A. Burton, originally from Spartanburg, South Carolina. I affectionately called her ‘Gram.’ Gram and my grandfather raised me from ages four to eighteen. I never formally photographed her or recorded her voice. It is a regret that has stayed with me throughout my career. I was young and didn't think that I needed to listen to her stories. Now, I'd do almost anything to hear her voice again. But when you're young, you think you're going to live forever, and you just assume your loved ones will too. I cry at just the sight of her handwriting.

“I thought it was too late for me to get her stories, but it wasn't too late to get other people's grandmother's stories, so I ventured throughout the Mississippi Delta to interview over fifty female church elders to combine personal narrative with poignant photographs of them and the region. I reached out to notable pastors for help.”

Her book, *Delta Jewels*, which contains images from the exhibition, among others, is a product of that project. Hachette Book Group is set to release *Delta Jewels* on April 7, 2015. Her national book tour will kick off with a book signing at the Powerhouse in Oxford.

# SouthDocs Films to Be Screened at 2015 Oxford Film Festival

The Oxford Film Festival has announced selections for its 12th annual festival, to be held February 26–March 1, 2015, at the Oxford Commons Malco. The opening-night event includes the Mississippi premiere of James Franco’s adaptation of *The Sound and The Fury*.

SouthDocs films will screen as a block on Friday at 3:30 p.m. and on Sunday at 3:30 p.m. One film, *The Way I See It*, was directed and produced by UM Honors College students Christine Dickason and Kaitlyn Barton. The film was created between the fall of 2012 and fall of 2014 with the assistance of Andy Harper, director of the Southern Documentary Project.

## *The Way I See It*

Directed by Christine Dickason and Kaitlyn Barton

Filmed at three randomly chosen Mississippi public schools, Magee High School, Northwest Rankin High School, and Leland High School, this documentary short explores whether the Mississippi school system is preparing high school students for college adequately.

The two other SouthDocs films include:

## *Bury the Show*

Directed by Matthew Graves  
Every year, thousands of high school theater programs across Texas compete in the One-Act Play contest. It’s a five-month journey of late-night rehearsals, long bus rides, and moments



of pure joy and sheer terror, all leading up to the opportunity to perform at the state tournament in Austin. It’s a place where dreams are made and crushed within a single spotlight. *Bury the Show* follows the cast and crew of the Seminole, Texas, high school theater team and their quest to be the first team in school history to win the state championship.



## *Longleaf: The Heart of Pine*

Directed by Rex Jones

Towering stands of old-growth longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) once covered over ninety million acres while stretching from southern Virginia to eastern Texas. Today, the total acreage is about two million, with only about two thousand of that considered old growth. As the South was settled and Northern timber supplies were exhausted, this incredible natural resource was very nearly extirpated from the South’s landscape and collective consciousness. *Longleaf: The Heart of Pine* is a cultural and natural history of the South’s ancient primeval forest and how it might still be saved.

SouthDocs filmmaker Matthew Graves also has a narrative short, *Barry*, screening with the other Mississippi shorts at Saturday at 4:30 p.m. and Sunday at 3:00 p.m.

## *Barry*

Directed by Matthew Graves  
Deep beneath a cold, dark forest lies Barry. His world is a dusty coffin and a cherished locket from his dear wife, Mary. He has come to terms with his present situation, but strange new noises are coming from outside his solitary home.

Trailers for these films and other SouthDocs projects can be found on the SouthDocs website, [www.southdocs.org](http://www.southdocs.org).

SouthDocs is pleased to announce the inaugural  
**Southern Documentary Festival**  
Coming Spring 2016. Go to [southdocs.org](http://southdocs.org) for details.

# Porter Fortune Jr. Symposium to Explore Southern Religion, Honor Charles Reagan Wilson

The 2015 Porter Fortune Jr. History Symposium will take place February 26–28 on the University of Mississippi campus. This year’s symposium will explore “Southern Religion and Southern Culture” and will include several programs celebrating the career of Charles Reagan Wilson, who retired in May 2014.

The Porter Fortune Jr. History Symposium began in the mid-1970s with a conference on the history of slavery. Center director Ted Ownby notes that this year’s symposium will return to the topic explored in 1984, which led to a collection, *Religion in the South*, edited by Charles Reagan Wilson. Ownby describes the format of the symposium: “The papers and panel discussions on Thursday and Friday, including a keynote lecture by Paul Harvey, will raise questions about Southern religious history and how best to define and study the subject. Then, events Friday evening and Saturday will turn to celebrating the influence Charles has had as a scholar and teacher, especially in the fields of Southern religious and cultural history. The moderators for the panels will be alumni Wilson taught in the history and Southern Studies programs, and all alums and other friends will have a shot at talking about Charles at a special open discussion in Barnard on Saturday morning. One distinctive feature will be a concert in Barnard on Friday night, free to anybody, by Caroline Herring. All of the events are open to the public.” Ownby and history and Southern Studies assistant professor Darren Grem are directing the symposium.

Please contact Becca Walton, [rwalton@olemiss.edu](mailto:rwalton@olemiss.edu), with any questions about the symposium. All sessions are free and open to the public.

## 2015 PORTER FORTUNE JR. HISTORY SYMPOSIUM “Southern Religion and Southern Culture”

Cosponsored by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture and the University of Mississippi History Department

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

*All Thursday sessions at the Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics*

2:00 p.m. Panel Discussion: Race and Civil Religion in the South  
Carolyn Renee Dupont, Eastern Kentucky University  
John Giggie, University of Alabama  
Calvin White Jr., University of Arkansas

Noon Lunch on your own

1:30 p.m. Panel Discussion: Southern Culture and Popular Religion  
Alison Colis Greene, Mississippi State University  
Gary Laderman, Emory University  
Chad Seales, University of Texas

3:30 p.m. Keynote Lecture by Paul Harvey, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

3:00 p.m. “The Religious Significance of Emancipation and Reconstruction for African Americans in the South, 1860–1880”  
Sandy Martin, University of Georgia

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

*All Friday sessions at the Depot. Concert at Barnard Observatory.*

9:00 a.m. “Print and Sacred Song in the Early South”  
Beth Barton Schweiger, University of Arkansas

“‘Shame of the Southland’: The Selling of the Visceral South”  
Sarah Gardner, Mercer University

“Spirit in the Air: Pentecostal Media Innovation in the 20th-Century South”  
Randall Stephens, Northumbria University

7:30 p.m. Concert with Caroline Herring  
Barnard Observatory

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28

*At Barnard Observatory*

10:30 a.m. “‘The Pure of Body Are Pure of Soul’: Religion and the Making of the South’s Sports Culture, 1865–1926”  
Arthur Remillard, St. Francis University

9:00 a.m. Discussion on the Future of the Field of Southern Religious History and on the Research and Teaching Legacy of Charles Reagan Wilson

# The Southern Foodways Alliance Documents the Struggle to Desegregate Southern Restaurants in the Counter Histories Film Series

The Southern Foodways Alliance (SFA) is proud to announce the release of Counter Histories, a new short film series and multimedia website. The project is the result of a year's worth of work in conjunction with longtime SFA collaborator and Southern Studies alum Kate Medley. The December 2014 publication of Counter Histories marked the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which desegregated places of public accommodation, including restaurants.

Each of the five films in Counter Histories tells the story of a lunch-counter sit-in in one Southern city or town: Jackson, Mississippi; Nashville, Tennessee; Rock Hill, South Carolina; Durham, North Carolina; and Cambridge, Maryland. The events featured in these films took place between 1957 and 1963. Collectively, along with dozens of other sit-ins across the region and beyond, they helped bring about the end of de jure segregation.

"The SFA's goal in commissioning Counter Histories was to put the

restaurant desegregation struggles of the 1950s and 1960s in historical context, make clear what lessons were learned in the process, and ask what work remains to be done toward the welcome table ideal," said SFA director John T. Edge.

"In making these films, I was struck again and again by the bravery and dedication of these young men and women," said Medley. "They risked arrest and bodily harm to carry out peaceful demonstrations that led to real change. The filmmakers and I feel fortunate to have met some of these individuals, and it is our privilege to share their stories."

In addition to the five films, each produced by a different team of filmmakers in conjunction with Medley and the SFA, the Counter Histories website includes an interactive timeline, archival photographs, and additional resources for students and researchers.

For additional information on Counter Histories and to view the films, visit [www.counterhistories.com](http://www.counterhistories.com).

## Celebrate Charles Reagan Wilson's Teaching Legacy and Support Students

In honor of Charles Reagan Wilson's retirement and long career 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 Center for the Study of Southern Culture's Southern Studies program will benefit from these funds.

Please consider a gift honoring Professor Wilson. Every amount helps. Gifts may be mailed to the UM Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38655, or donate online by visiting [southernstudies.olemiss.edu/giving](http://southernstudies.olemiss.edu/giving), follow the link, and choose "Charles Reagan Wilson Graduate Support Fund."



Students from Tougaloo College stage a sit-in at the Woolworth's lunch counter in downtown Jackson, Mississippi, in May 1968.

FRED BLACKWELL

# Southern Studies Documentary Photograph Collection Now Available Online

Student photography works documenting the South are now available online through the University of Mississippi Libraries Digital Collections: <http://clio.lib.olemiss.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/ssdocphoto>.

The images are from David Wharton's documentary photography seminar and span classes from 2000 to 2013. Each class started with a theme that inspired the subject matter, ranging from "Change and Tradition" to "Labor and Leisure."

"I think this is important for several of reasons," said Wharton. "First of all, we now have a visual record of the Oxford community and the surrounding area that stretches back 15 years, and, hopefully, that will continue to be compiled for at least a few more. Secondly, this archive helps demonstrate that visual knowledge is first-hand evidence that can—and should—be reckoned with as an equal partner with verbal descriptions of the region. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it gets students out into the Southern world they're studying, allowing them to have their own experiences in that world and draw their own conclusions about it. Don't get me wrong, they should, by all means, read about the South, but they should also experience it. Making photographs is a great way of doing that."

"We are very happy to have contemporary photography as an element of our collections," said Jessica Leming, visual collections librarian. "It's great to have works representing new views of Mississippi and the region, captured by future leaders in the South." The collection is expected to grow as photographs from additional years are contributed.



*Color Guard, Oxford, Mississippi, 2009, by Bingo Gunter*



*Bowlers, Oxford, Mississippi, 2009, by Tyler Keith*



*Batesville, Mississippi, 2010, by Camilla Aikin*

Original prints are now held in cold storage for preservation in the Department of Archives and Special Collections. A finding aid for the collection is available here: <http://purl.oclc.org/umarchives/MUM00740/>.

Questions about the collection can be directed to Jessica Leming at [jleming1@olemiss.edu](mailto:jleming1@olemiss.edu).

# Beyond Barnard: Conversations with Southern Studies Alumni

Interviews by Rebecca Lauck Cleary

**Angela James** released her album *Way Down Deep* last year, and it was named one of the top-10 Chicago albums of 2014 by *RedEye* magazine. James has lived in Chicago since 2008, with her husband, visual artist and musician Jordan Martins.

## How does your Southern Studies degree help with your songwriting?

There's a really literal answer here: I only started writing songs about three and a half years ago, and when I did, what came out was basically classic country music. It sounded like the material that I studied and played during the course of the MA program. I hadn't really listened to that music since graduating, but being from east Tennessee, I'd heard that kind of music growing up, and it was in my cultural DNA. My thesis was more or less about music as historic preservation and the phenomenon of using the music of your past to connect to some sense of time and place in your present, as well as to your ancestry. So I was pretty much living out my graduate research, but that didn't really dawn on me until much later.

## Can you tell me about the grants you received to help with support for the album?

I received a \$3,000 grant from the Illinois Arts Council in 2014 to put my first full-length record out on vinyl as part of their Individual Artist Support program. I'd received

a separate grant of \$4,000 from the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events for the recording and mixing back in 2013. I found out about both programs from friends and other artists who had received them, and I had excellent grant-writing training from Ann Abadie at the Center because of my graduate assistantship with *Thacker Mountain Radio*.

## Explain the process of making the album.

This was my first full-length record, so everything was new, and the learning curve was steep. I involved and collaborated with so many different people at every level of production. I wanted this album to not just be a record of some musical performances, but to be a literal record of what my experience of being an artist in Chicago has been

like to this point. Chicago is a city of artistic collaboration. There's a sense of improvisation, spaciousness, and cross-pollination here that inspires me deeply. I was very fortunate to receive funding for about 75 percent of the production costs, which allowed me to take some artistic risks. My husband, Jordan, who helped produce the record and is often my songwriting partner, was the driving force behind that vision. It wasn't always very comfortable to be that vulnerable, but the results are that it's a really good record. The difficulties mostly have to do with things going wrong, or simply not as planned. I grew as an artist, of course, but I also feel like this record has fundamentally changed my personality and the way I look at things. It's a big can of worms.



**Lauchlin Fields** has been focusing on the people, places, and cultural happenings in Mississippi for more than a decade as a writer and oral historian. With the launch of her magazine the *'Sip* last year, she focuses on Mississippi's traditions and culture.

## What is the process of deciding to publish a magazine and how you made the dream a reality.

I really have had the dream of starting my own magazine since I was at Ole Miss, maybe even before. Since then, I have read and researched what it takes to publish a magazine. After working for a newspaper for almost five years, I was able to make a lot of great contacts with talented writers and photographers. It's like I've been building this network without realizing it all these years. I immediately reached out to the ones I knew I wanted to work



JORDAN MARTINS

Angela James



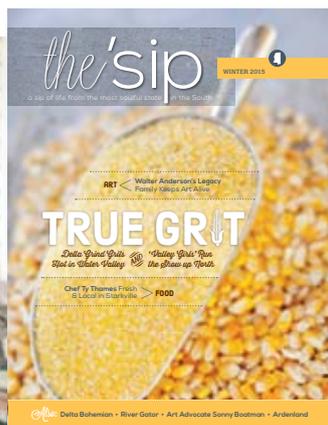
Lauchlin Fields

with on the *'Sip*. By reaching out to those people I really wanted to work with, I somehow built a dream team of writers, photographers, and designers. When I see each issue come together, it really blows me away how talented everyone is.

### What has been the best thing so far about being the editor of the *'Sip*, and what has been your biggest challenge?

I have really enjoyed every aspect of creating, editing, and publishing the magazine. Being able to oversee the publication of stories about people, places, and culture in Mississippi has been an amazing journey and experience. Every issue offers a unique display of in-depth storytelling, high-quality photographs, and creative design. I love deciding on the stories in each issue, which takes a good bit of time to develop because of all the factors: making sure all the regions are covered, representing all of the feature and section categories, having a diverse selection of stories, and making sure we have the best writer and photographer for the story. It all matters.

The biggest challenge, I guess, is time. We are all putting together the *'Sip* in our "free" time. We all have full-time jobs or are running our own businesses. Many of us are moms to small children. But, we are passionate



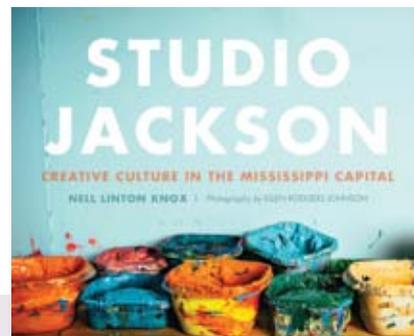
about the work we are doing with the magazine. It's growing, and we have big plans to make it a household name all over the Southeast.

### What are the topics of your next issue?

Our cover story is about Delta Grind Grits in Water Valley and how Water Valley has an increasing number of woman-owned businesses. We'll have a story about Corinth art supporter Sonny Boatman, Jackson music promoter Arden Barnett of Ardenland, Chef Ty Thames of Starkville, and a story about Walter Anderson's daughter and grandson continuing his legacy through their own art. We'll also highlight Mississippi cookbooks recommended by Turnrow Books in Greenwood and Dunn's Falls near Meridian.



Nell Linton Knox published *Studio Jackson: Creative Culture in the Mississippi Capital* in 2014. The book is a fascinating story behind the creative community of visual artists and craftsmen, with compelling photography by Ellen Rodgers Johnson.



Nell Linton Knox (left) with Ellen Rodgers Johnson



### How did you choose the people included in the book?

### Why was it important to focus on creative people in your book?

Before writing *Studio Jackson*, I'd had the pleasure of interviewing some local creatives for magazine articles. Writing for a magazine, there is always something new each month or quarter to publish, so there's an ephemeral quality to the writing; magazines are on the racks for a month, and then they are archived. As I met more and more creatives in Jackson, I felt like there was a story waiting to be told. I realized that there was a common thread running through the narratives of each artist or craftsman I interviewed. All of them were very aware of a creative community here in Jackson and had chosen to stay here and be a part of that community. I decided that it was important to look at how each narrative wove a bigger story about community, about the creative economy, and about this city that I call home.

Some of the people we included were those who I had previously interviewed for magazine articles, such as Fletcher Cox and Andy Young. Some are personal friends, such as Kristen Ley and Tom Beck. I'm married to the painter William Goodman who has been a part of the arts and culture scene in Jackson since 2003, so he was also a big part of helping gather individuals who were willing to tell their stories. He definitely helped connect with me with people who I might not have been able to track down otherwise.

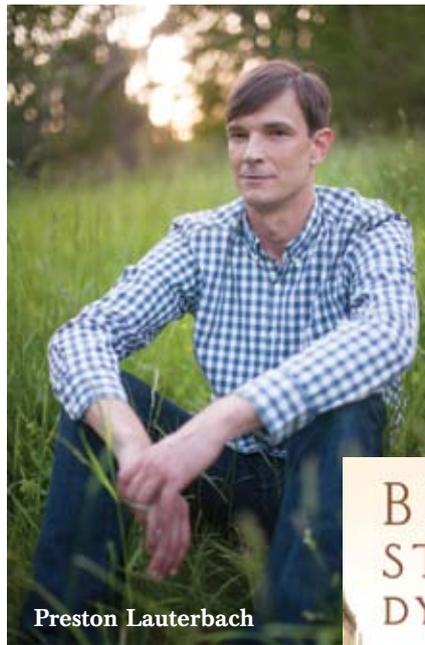
**Why was it important to focus on the concept of the creative economy, and why do you think Jackson is thriving in that area?**

The state decided that 2014 was the Year of the Creative Economy, and I really wanted to know what creative people had to say about that. When interviewing some of the craftsmen and artists in Jackson who've been here the longest, I was told that "creativity economy" is a new idea—if you're in a creative line of work, then every year is the year of the creative economy.

In 2013 the *Atlantic* magazine came to Jackson and interviewed some younger members of the creative set about why working in Jackson is a good idea. The resounding theme in that article was that Jackson is an affordable place to live and rent a studio, and this is especially true if you compare Jackson to places like New York or Paris. I was mostly interested in those native sons who valued creativity and decided that committing to Jackson was the way to make Jackson thrive. I think that Jackson is on the cusp of greatness, and I think the creatives are the ones fanning that flame.



**Preston Lauterbach's** book *Beale Street Dynasty* is coming out in March, and he will launch the book in a series of events at Rhodes College, March 19–21, and at a signing at Square Books on March 25.



Preston Lauterbach

He will also appear in a panel discussion at the Oxford Conference for the Book on March 27.

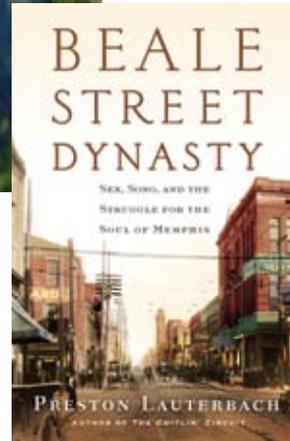
**How did the idea for *Beale Street Dynasty* come about?**

I didn't necessarily know when I began researching *Beale Street* that it could be a book or that Mr. Church was the key figure, but those developments fed each other. Everywhere I looked—Beale Street music, civil rights, business, and events like the Memphis riot of 1866—I found Church. He was the guiding force behind the street becoming famous and powerful. Though figures like Ida B. Wells and W. C. Handy are better-recognized products of Beale Street culture, Beale would have been just another strip of gravel without him.

**What fascinates you most about Church?**

The most fascinating aspect of Church is how he made his fortune. It's shocking that a man born a slave could have become "the South's first black millionaire" and develop this iconic American institution through the proceeds of white prostitutes. He built Memphis's red-light district one block parallel to Beale before Beale became home of the blues.

The *Dynasty* in the book's title refers not only to Church, who died in 1912, but his son, who became boss of Beale Street and built the most powerful black political machine of the early 20th century. Young Church helped Memphis's notorious dictator "Boss" Crump gain power over the city, and the story culminates with the struggle between these two factions, Crump and Church, a battle that made noise all the way up in the FDR White House.



**What surprised you the most during your research for this book?**

Singer Rufus Thomas said something to the effect that if you could be black for one Saturday night on Beale Street, you'd never want to be white anymore. That's an incredibly powerful statement considering the brutal

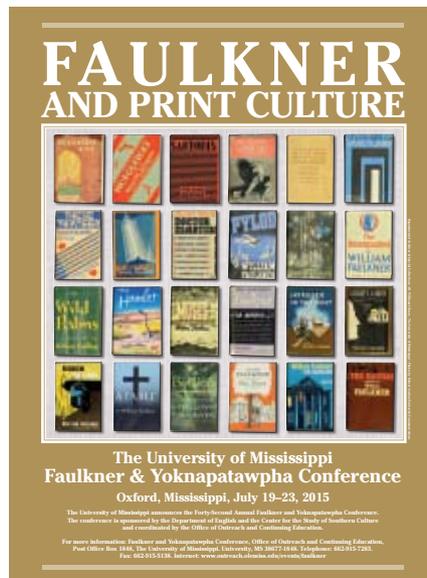
realities of life for black Americans during the time. Though Memphis certainly wasn't immune to the violent crises of the South, some surreal stuff happened on Beale. Black politicians held elected offices far beyond the end of Reconstruction, while black voters faced lethal resistance in other parts of the South. In the late 1880s, while lynchings of black men occurred rampantly throughout the South, often for minor or imagined transgressions committed against white women, a posse of black men organized on Beale Street for the purpose of ending the age-old practice of miscegenation between white men and black women. They totally turned the tables on history. And I found an instance of a blue-blooded white man who "passed" as black to live in the Beale Street underworld for ten years until the late 1890s. I'm sure he could have vouched for what Rufus Thomas later said.

# Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference Update

## “Popular Faulkner” Class Offered with “Faulkner and Print Culture” Conference

As planning continues for the “Faulkner and Print Culture” conference, July 19–23, 2015, the Department of English will offer a 3-credit-hour course, ENGL 566, in conjunction with the conference. The class, which will be taught by professor Jaime Harker of the University of Mississippi, may be taken for undergraduate or graduate credit and hopes to attract high school teachers, students at the UM or other universities, and other attendees seeking a more intensive conference experience. Course tuition will include the conference registration fee, and the credit hours will be transferable and can be applied to advanced degree programs or teacher certification requirements. Affordable dormitory housing on the UM campus is available for enrollees.

The intent of ENGL 566 is to complement the conference program by providing students with a deeper interpretive and pedagogical encounter with Faulkner’s work in relation to the conference theme. With that goal in mind, the class will be organized around the topic of “Popular Faulkner.” As Harker explains, “Faulkner has long been understood as a great American writer who transcends the vagaries of the marketplace.” While that view helped enshrine Faulkner in the American literary canon, it has also, she adds, “obscured Faulkner’s varied and creative intersection with the varieties of print culture and his profound engagement with popular forms.” “Popular Faulkner” will focus on six middlebrow and popular novels by Faulkner—*Sanctuary*, *The Wild Palms*, *Intruder in the Dust*, *The Hamlet*, *The Mansion*, and *The*



*Reivers*—and will also draw on scholarly studies by Janice Radway, Joan Shelley Rubin, David M. Earle, Gordon Hutner, Erin Smith, Greg Barnhisel, and Harker herself to provide context and framing for Faulkner’s interventions into the print cultures of his era.

ENGL 566 will be offered as a “hybrid” class during the second summer session of the University of Mississippi’s academic calendar. For the first two weeks of the session, participants will read off-site and post detailed reading responses to the course’s online environment. Then from July 13 to July 24, the class will convene on the UM campus and will include all lectures, panels, and related sessions at “Faulkner and Print Culture” in its schedule of contact hours. The course will culminate in a syllabus assignment and a 10-12-page analytic paper.

Jaime Harker is associate professor of English and interim director of the Sarah Isom Center for Women

and the Gender Studies Program at the University of Mississippi, where she has taught since 2003. She is the author of *America the Middlebrow: Women’s Novels, Progressivism, and Middlebrow Authorship between the Wars* (2007) and *Middlebrow Queer: Christopher Isherwood in America* (2013), and coeditor of *The Oprah Affect: Critical Essays on Oprah’s Book Club* (2008) and *1960s Gay Pulp Fiction: The Misplaced Heritage* (2013). Her work on Faulkner includes essays in *Faulkner’s Sexualities: Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha*, 2007 and the forthcoming *Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner*, and with Jay Watson she guest-edited a forthcoming special issue of *Mississippi Quarterly* on Oprah Winfrey’s Summer of Faulkner.

Interested participants should contact Professor Harker at [jlharker@olemiss.edu](mailto:jlharker@olemiss.edu) at their earliest convenience. Those who are not UM students will need to apply and be admitted to the university in order to enroll in ENGL 566. Those who wish to take the course for graduate credit may apply to the Graduate School for nondegree admission; please bear in mind that the Graduate School application deadline for summer enrollment is March 30, 2015.

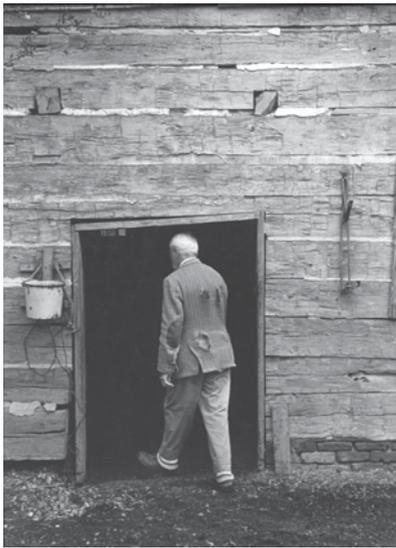
For more information about “Faulkner and Print Culture,” visit the conference website at [www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner/index.html#class](http://www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner/index.html#class) or contact Jay Watson, conference director, at [jwatson@olemiss.edu](mailto:jwatson@olemiss.edu).

Jay Watson

# Faulkner's World: *The Photographs of Martin J. Dain*

## A Traveling Exhibition

The photographs of Martin Dain provide a unique journey into the world of William Faulkner. Taken between 1961 and 1963, Dain's photographs portray Faulkner at



MARTIN DAIN

home as well as provide a comprehensive look at the people and cultural traditions that inspired him. This collection provides an extraordinary window through which to view community history and from which to reflect on culture and change in Oxford and the surrounding area. As the exhibition discusses and interprets the legacy of William Faulkner, it also provides an opportunity to prompt community dialogue.

The exhibition opened at the University of Mississippi in 1997 and traveled for two years as part of the Faulkner Centennial Celebration, had an encore tour in 2007 in conjunction with the Mississippi Reads project administered through the Mississippi Library Commission, and is once again available, this time for libraries, museums, and cultural centers in Mississippi and surrounding states. *Faulkner's World: The Photographs of Martin J. Dain* was curated and produced by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture. The exhibition has thirty-six 16" x 20" black-and-white photographs and four text panels, presented in 24" x 30" frames.

A book of the Dain photographs, published by the Center and the University Press of Mississippi, is available with the exhibition. Oxford author Larry Brown wrote the foreword for the book. Tom Rankin, editor of the book and curator of the exhibition, wrote the introduction, which examines Dain's life and career as a photographer.

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

# Eudora Welty Awards

Do you have a son who might be the next Richard Wright? A daughter who can channel her inner O'Connor with a flick of a pen? If so, encourage these young people to enter stories and poems for consideration in the Center for the Study of Southern Culture's annual Eudora Welty Awards.

Students must be Mississippi residents. The competition is open to ninth through twelfth graders, and writing should be submitted through students' high schools. Short stories should not exceed 3,000 words, and poetry should not exceed 100 lines.

Winning students will be notified at least a month prior to award presentation. The first-place prize for each category is \$500, and the second-place prize is \$250. The winners will also be recognized at the opening of the 2015 Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference on the University campus in July.

Each entry should be accompanied by the entry form and postmarked by April 13, 2015. Faculty and staff from the Center for the Study of Southern Culture will judge the entries and select the winners. Application and submission requirements will be sent to all Mississippi public and private schools. If you know a Mississippi student currently enrolled in high school outside of the state or who is homeschooled, please e-mail [rebeccac@olemiss.edu](mailto:rebeccac@olemiss.edu) or call 662-915-3369 for a copy. To see a list of past winners or to download the application, visit <http://southernstudies.olemiss.edu/academics/high-school-eudora-welty-awards/>.



KAY BELL

# Southern Foodways Alliance Dishes Up Virginia Yock

The Southern Foodways Alliance's newest oral history project explores a savory noodle soup that's practically unheard of outside its natural habitat.

In Tidewater Virginia, the southeastern region of the state that includes Norfolk, Suffolk, and Portsmouth, yock-a-mein is known as a box of yock. The name refers to the Chinese take-out box in which it's served. It's also simply called "yock," but there are endless ways to spell the name of the dish.

It's likely that yock arrived in Tidewater when Chinese immigrants moved to Virginia in the early 20th century. Some theories suggest that because of segregation many Chinese immigrants could open restaurants only in African American neighborhoods, introducing folks to yock-a-mein, which translates to "one order of noodles." African American customers took the dish home, altered ingredients to taste, and developed their own special recipe from the traditional Chinese dish.

Tidewater yock bears only small similarities to other ya-ka-mein traditions. For example, Virginia uses lo mein noodles, still made in factories



Patsy Wong, Sing Wong Restaurant, Portsmouth, Virginia, 2014

SARA WOOD

in Tidewater, versus the spaghetti noodles used in the New Orleans version of the dish. A choice of meat—chicken, pork, shrimp, beef, or, sometimes, sausage—tops the noodles followed by a dice of raw white onions.

Depending on who's making the yock, the ratio of soy sauce to ketchup varies. A mixture of ketchup and soy sauce forms its own broth, though some prefer chicken broth.

A hard-boiled egg is optional, as is a pour of vinegar. Most folks finish it off by sprinkling cayenne pepper over the top.

When you want yock in Tidewater, you'll find it in Chinese take-out restaurants, like Sing Wong in Portsmouth, owned by Patsy and Haymond Wong. Haymond's grandfather, the restaurant's namesake, opened it in 1965.

Or you can wait for a yock fundraiser—popular in black churches in Tidewater—like the one at Tabernacle Christian Church in Suffolk. There Bernice "Florida" Cofield cooks yock she's made for more than thirty years, using a recipe she got from Perry Jane Davis Lambert, former owner of the Horseshoe Cafe in Suffolk.

Once a dish limited to certain communities in Tidewater, these stories paint a history of how a box of yock moved beyond the boundaries of neighborhood, race, and culture.

Explore these oral histories, and hundreds of others, online at [southernfoodways.org/oral-history](http://southernfoodways.org/oral-history).

Sara Wood



SARA WOOD

# Coming Soon from SouthDocs: *La Frontera*

I recently spent two months in Texas producing *La Frontera*, my latest Southern Documentary Project film, which chronicles a trekker's walk along the Texas-Mexico border. Mark J. Hains is a naturalist, adventurer, and author from Andalusia, Alabama. I met Mark, at the time a staff member at the Longleaf Alliance, last year during production on *Longleaf: The Heart of Pine*. When he told me about his planned expedition to Texas, I knew it had the potential to provide great cinema. Andy Harper, director of the Southern Documentary Project, agreed and provided support for the trip.

Mark began his walk on October 26 at International Boundary Marker 1 in El Paso, which marks the convergence of Texas, New Mexico, and Mexico. He finished on December 22 at Boca Chica Beach in Brownsville, where the Rio Grande empties into the Gulf of Mexico. In his Herculean effort to cover the approximate distance of 1,100 miles across Texas, Mark walked an average of twenty miles a day for almost eight weeks. He also established three rules to operate by: stay alive; start walking every morning at the same place he stopped the previous

evening, and never walk past a bar without stopping in for a libation. Your correspondent is pleased to confirm his strict adherence to these maxims.

I embarked upon this trip with more than a little trepidation, having heard stories of horrific violence and unbridled chaos on both sides of the border. I was also advised on more than one occasion, before and during the trip, to carry a weapon

for protection (I did not). Very soon after my arrival, I found the border to be a place that almost nobody understands unless they live there. The reports of anarchy on the American side were grossly exaggerated, and I never felt concerned for my safety. I believe that the general public conflates the extensive narcoviolence in Mexico with a similar situation on the north side of the Rio Grande, but that is not the case. For example, Ciudad Juarez is one of the most dangerous cities on the planet (at one time it was deadlier than Baghdad), but it is right across the river (and fence/wall) from El Paso, which is one of the safest cities in the United States.

Mark's amazing feat of endurance is compelling enough, but I also wanted to focus on the culture, communities, and people we met along the way. Two of the major themes of the film are border security/policy and immigration justice/rights. This particular international border has become highly militarized and surveilled, and it is a strange phenomenon to feel as though you're being watched all the time. Indeed, I became inured to US Customs and Border Protection agents rushing up in a cloud of dust to question my presence near the fence/wall or river.

From right-wing ranchers to cowboy poets to human-rights activists to fence/wall opponents, I met many interesting people who were eager to discuss life on the Texas-Mexico border. This chorus of voices provides many insights, but no clear answer, to the question of how to balance border security and immigration rights. The only conclusion I can draw is that *La Frontera* divides two countries, but not two cultures. Look for the film in the second half of 2015 and find more information about it at [www.lafrontera-movie.com](http://www.lafrontera-movie.com).

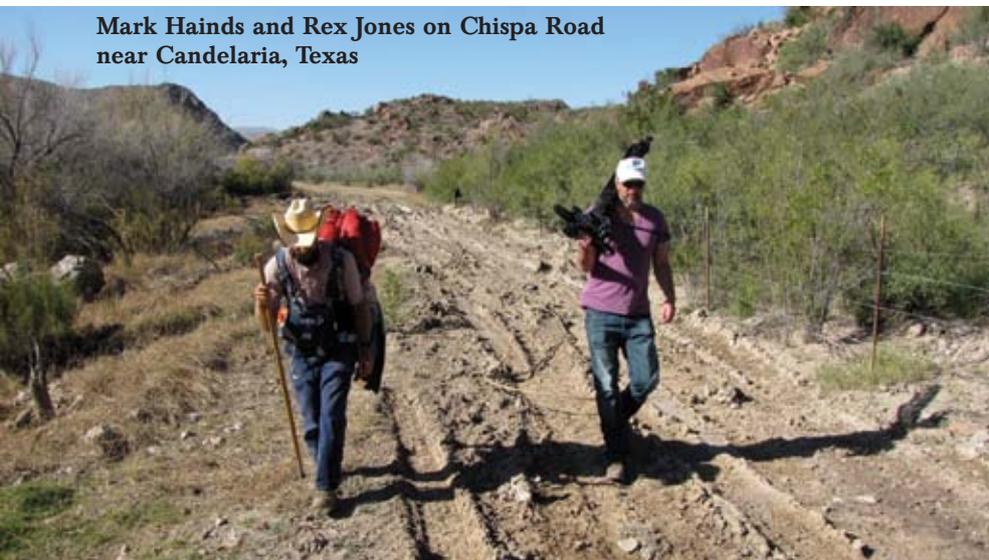
Rex Jones



CURTIS HAINDS

Mark Hains and Rex Jones on Boca Chica Beach at the end of Mark's walk

Mark Hains and Rex Jones on Chispa Road near Candelaria, Texas



RONNIE VEHORN

# Pop Culture and Southern Food

## Connecting Modernity and Tradition

As told to Sara Camp Arnold by Charles Reagan Wilson

*First published in Issue #54 of the Southern Foodways Alliance's journal, Gravy.*

### DEFINITIONS & HOGS

Popular culture is mass culture. It's mass-produced. It doesn't strive for authenticity, for craftsmanship, so much as to promote consumption. It is made for wide audiences, not for narrow audiences. You can make an easy contrast with folklife and folk culture, which tends to be rooted in communities and built around social groups.

In the South, pop culture is negotiated between tradition and modernity. It often draws from folklore, from folk symbols and rituals. But it is not so much concerned with authenticity as it is with reproducing these symbols for broad audiences.

One of my favorite examples of this negotiation is the pig. Hogs were a major source of Southern foodways going all the way back to settlement. When the South produced what we might call a fast-food place, the barbecue joint, the pig was at the center of it. Barbecue restaurants seem traditional. But they also commodify a traditional Southern food. The pig itself becomes the negotiator, the popular culture symbol that draws together tradition and modernity.

That's one point: Popular culture is mass-produced. It connects tradition and modernity, and produced a group of common, well-known symbols and icons that become associated with the South itself.



### AUNT JEMIMA & JEB STUART

The New South movement in the 1880s was about diversifying the economy and making the South wealthier. In that period of the late 19th century, the South produced popular culture representations and artifacts related to the Lost Cause and to the Confederacy. Robert E. Lee on a bag of flour, for example. His image had moral authority in the South. You had Stonewall Jackson and Jefferson Davis. You had Jeb Stuart, the romantic cavalryman. He was very saleable. So you had those images on plates, on all sorts of mass-produced goods.

Often those goods were

manufactured in other parts of the country. Despite the New South-movement call for economic diversification, the South remained a largely agricultural area. In the American industrial economy, the North was often the producer, and the South was the consumer. Mass-produced popular culture items were symbols that the region's people could respond to. Southern advisers often served Northern companies that sold goods in the South.

Aunt Jemima is a good example of this. Aunt Jemima was introduced at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. Nancy Green, a freed slave, was the original image for the first ready-mix pancake mix. What Aunt Jemima sold was the South as a place of gentility and servants. Popular culture is about mass-producing images, as well as mass-producing pancakes.

What Aunt Jemima gave the company was this image, deep in the American psyche, of the South as a land where people served you. Even though it's fast and convenient—you're giving kind of a moral authority of the culture from the South—it's like she is symbolically serving you. She always is portrayed with the bandana, the apron. When she appears in person, like at the World's Fair, she speaks in dialect. She tells tales about the Old South. This is part of this romanticization of the Old South that occurs in the late 19th century. The company that produces Aunt Jemima is not from the South. It is a Northern company

exploiting this fascination with the South in the American market.

## COOKING WITH ELVIS

**SCA: You have this set of Elvis recipe cards. And Elvis is not someone I associate with food, except a peanut butter-and-banana sandwich.**

You can't say Elvis was a gourmet. But Elvis loved food. And he would have had to be a member of the Southern Foodways Alliance if he were still alive. But these recipes—they're not very imaginative, you know. A hamburger, boneless chicken, meatloaf, home-fried potatoes, and a ham sandwich.

**SCA: Why would a marketer want to connect Elvis and food?**

Because you connect Elvis to everything. There's a market for Elvis. Because people who are crazy about Elvis are crazy about all things Elvis.

I think Elvis's audience today is Southern whites. It's working-class people, and it's women. All of those people are touched by Elvis. Despite his extraordinary celebrity and success, he remained very much an identifiable white Southerner of a certain time period and place. And his food was part of that. A lot of working-class white Southerners identify with his food.

We say in the South, "Don't get above your raising." And Elvis never got above his raising. And food was a classic case of how he never got above his raising. He was not aspiring to go to a high-style restaurant or eat fine food. He was eating what he grew up eating, and he still loved it all his life, even though though he could go anywhere and he could afford to eat anything. And I think people who would buy these cards appreciate that about Elvis. And they probably are going home and cooking these recipes.

## CHITLIN STRUT

One of the things we haven't talked about in terms of popular culture is festivals. Most of the festivals in the South today are popular culture, but they grew out of folk traditions. The fair, the county fair, is the folk progenitor. At the county fair, in the old days, you would have had a beauty contest. You would have had the queen of the county fair. Out of that came the beauty pageant that is pop-



ular culture. They're not the old folk festival that goes back to agricultural fairs. They're modern. They're commodifying the women in terms of the beauty pageant.

So many of the festivals today are popular culture in that they aim at a mass audience. And they are often all about consumption. But they still draw from that traditional Southern iconography. In Mississippi, the watermelon festival in Water Valley is an example. So is the catfish festival in Belzoni. There's a chitlin strut in Salley, South Carolina, which I love. I've never been to it; that's one of the places I'd love to go. Even something lowly like chitlins, they have raised it up, and it becomes a tourist attraction.

## LUCKY DOGS

Places have their particularities. In the postmodern 21st century, tourism is everywhere. We're trying to get people to come to our places, to spend their money, and eat the local food. New Orleans is the classic case: eating oysters at Acme oyster bar, buying beignets at Café du Monde, and getting the muffuletta at Central Grocery.

My wife's family made home-made Italian sausage. They lived in Jackson, Mississippi. And when my wife was a little girl, they would drive to New Orleans to go to Central Grocery to buy the fennel seeds that you couldn't buy in Mississippi. They were an "Italian food" ingredient. Central Grocery was owned by an Italian family. Her family would drive down from Jackson to New Orleans, they'd eat a muffuletta, they'd drive back, and make their Italian sausage. They made a special trip—tourism—to get this fennel seed for their Italian sausage. That was a long time ago. But that's an example of a way that food can figure into people coming to a place and spending their money, which is what the tourist industry wants them to do.

It goes back a long way, but Lafcadio Hearn, in the late 19th century, wrote some of the earliest articles about food in New Orleans. He talks about the street vendors. And they're still there. Lucky Dogs are a good example. In New Orleans, food is central to your experience. Whether it's eating at a world-renowned restaurant, or a beignet, or a muffuletta. Or, as the bars are winding down, eating a Lucky Dog.

*Photos by Danny Klimetz. Pieces from the "Southern Tacky" collection of Charles Reagan Wilson at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture.*

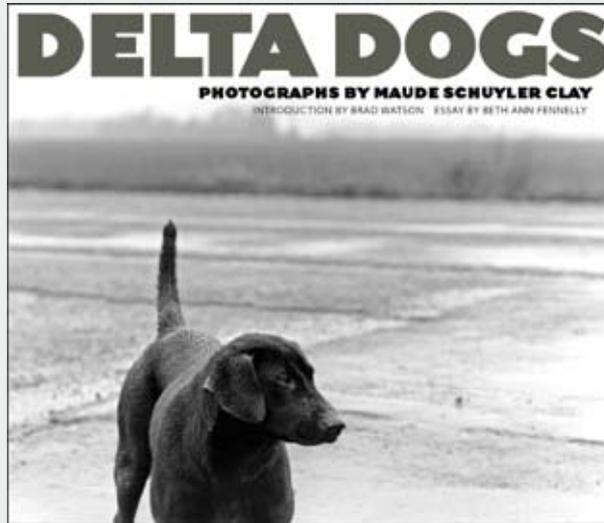
# READING THE SOUTH

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

## *Delta Dogs*

Photographs by Maude Schuyler Clay. Introduction by Brad Watson. Essay by Beth Ann Fennelly. Afterword by Maude Schuyler Clay. 96 pages. 80 duotone plates. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. \$35.00.

I know the world of rural roads. At various times in my life, I've become familiar with several places whose networks of local roads don't make it into road atlases: the dairy country of upstate New York, the Willamette Valley of western Oregon, the ranch and farm roads of central Texas, and, most recently, the Mississippi Delta. These places have little in common in terms of topography, vegetation, or climate. One thing they do share, though, is dogs. In all of these places a good number of dogs can be seen along the rural roadsides—single dogs, pairs of dogs, packs of dogs. They are variously large, small, proud, scruffy, well fed, emaciated, and all largely oblivious to your human presence unless you get out of the car and invade their space. Their noses snuffle along the ground, their tails wag or vibrate, and in hot weather their tongues loll out. I've often wondered what they do all day and have sometimes thought it might be fun to be a dog with acres of countryside to explore and plenty of time to do it in. Once, in an idle moment, I thought about attaching a camera to a friend's roaming dog and setting it to make an exposure every so often, just to see where Rufus and his buddies might go and what they might do, but that idea never got very far. Nowadays, in the era of "bodycams" and GoPros, it would be an easy task, but my



one-time interest in the lives of dogs has cooled somewhat.

That's not the case with Maude Schuyler Clay, though, as she amply demonstrates in her new book of photographs, *Delta Dogs*. A native of the Mississippi Delta, she has been photographing local dogs—rural dogs, roadside dogs, small-town dogs—for quite some time now, starting with her own childhood pets. She does so partly out of concern for the dogs' welfare (many seem homeless), partly because she likes them (she has adopted at least one of her canine subjects), and partly because of what their presence says about the human culture of her native Delta (though relatively small in many of the pictures, they seem appropriate to the expansive rural landscape).

There is no shortage of dogs in *Delta Dogs*—at least one can be seen in each of the book's eighty photographs. In many they are the main subject(s) and obviously so. In others, they are small, but function as essential bits of living movement in an otherwise still landscape. In a few, they are hard to find, setting the viewer off on a *Where's Waldo?* kind of search. Each photograph

has a title with the word *Dog* in it, along with its physical location: *Sidewalk Dog, Tutwiler; Cotton Stalk Dog, near Drew; Church Parking Lot Dog, Mississippi Delta*. The focus is certainly on dogs here, and they are, ostensibly, the reason for the book.

But I can't help but wonder: what's so special about the dogs we encounter

in *Delta Dogs*? Nothing, really. They are no different than the dogs alongside any number of American roads. What is special is their environment, the world they live in. Anyone who claims to know the South understands that the Mississippi Delta is a unique place. It is home to a few people of great wealth and many people who live in extreme poverty. Its social order is one of widely divergent racial realities that very much mirror the region's economic conditions. More happily, the Delta is also the birthplace of a good bit of America's rich musical culture, much of which has spread worldwide. As I leaf through *Delta Dogs*, my eyes and mind go to where the dogs are, to the landscape they roam, rather than to the dogs themselves. And even though the publisher has done no one any favors with the book's generally dark and muddy reproductions, if one can get past that and understand *Delta Dogs* as an extension of Ms. Clay's earlier *Delta Land* (1999), a very fine book of landscape photographs, *Delta Dogs* immediately takes on greater depth and meaning. Seen that way, it looks beyond the dogs to the Mississippi Delta and

its unique landscape—not only to what that landscape looks like, but what it means as well. *Delta Dogs*, in its own special way, adds to that meaning and increases our understanding of the Delta's land and culture—a worthy achievement, to be sure.

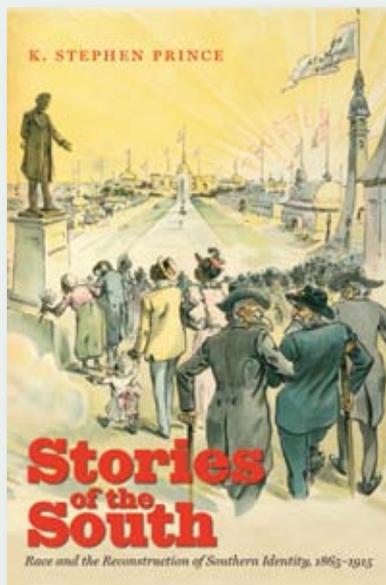
David Wharton

## *Stories of the South: Race and the Reconstruction of Southern Identity, 1865–1915*

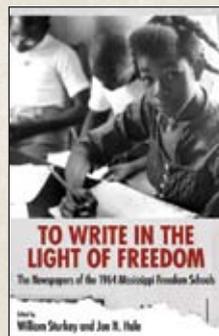
By K. Stephen Prince. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014. 321 pages. \$39.95 cloth.

For whatever reasons, the history of Reconstruction seems to have resisted scholarly efforts to connect political history with cultural history. K. Stephen Prince makes a significant contribution to the merging of issues of power and politics with issues of cultural representation in *Stories of the South*. The new volume details fifty years of competing narratives about the South and its place in American life. Prince offers the book as a corrective to past scholarship that emphasized sectional reunion; instead, he tells the story of competition among various visions of the South. It would be obvious to say the concept of the South was contested, so the strength of Prince's book is the analysis of the multiple forms of contesting, with the rise and fall of the popularity of stories about the defeated South, the modernizing South, the exotic South, the violent South, the authentic South, and several others.

*Stories of the South* has three sections. It opens in 1865 and 1866 with Northern writers and other travelers thinking about the possibilities of making the South more like the North and continues with intriguing analyses of who told the stories about carpetbaggers and the Ku Klux Klan. A second section discusses narratives of economic progress, analyzes the work of four writers—Thomas Nelson Page, Joel Chandler Harris, George Washington Cable, and Charles Chesnut—who helped



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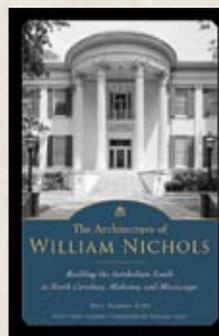


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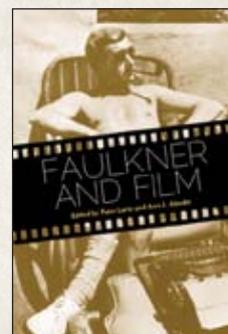


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define the South, and concludes with an extended analysis of Northern-produced minstrel companies. A final section analyzes the rise of disfranchisement and racial segregation as developments that most white Americans accepted and supported. Like many of the good books in the field, from C. Vann Woodward's *Origins of the New South* to David Blight's *Race and Reunion*, Prince's book ends in the 1910s with powerful forces North and South agreeing to tell stories that celebrated slavery and agreeing not to press for civil rights for black Americans.

This is an ambitious work, and three features stand out. First, Prince insists that understanding Southern history involves understanding the American North and understanding what various groups said and did in criticism and defense and how they expressed their interest in scholarly analysis and entertainment as well as in more straightforward political discussions. He states clearly in

the introduction, "I argue that post-war southern identity was, in large measure, constructed in the North. Thus, many of the era's most significant treatments of the South were crafted with a northern audience in mind." Second, as the title of the book indicates, Prince emphasizes stories of how things were changing over time. That meant that all sorts of people used history to discuss slavery and race, the Civil War and Reconstruction, and politics, the purposes of government, and American potential. Third, the author details wonderful specifics on topics that many historians may tend to teach as part of general categories. For example, all American historians know about the concept of the carpetbagger, but Prince illustrates the intense interest in the term by the thoroughness of its definition in the *Directory of Americanisms* in 1877. Scholars have detailed and analyzed the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the late 1860s; Prince discusses which aspects of the

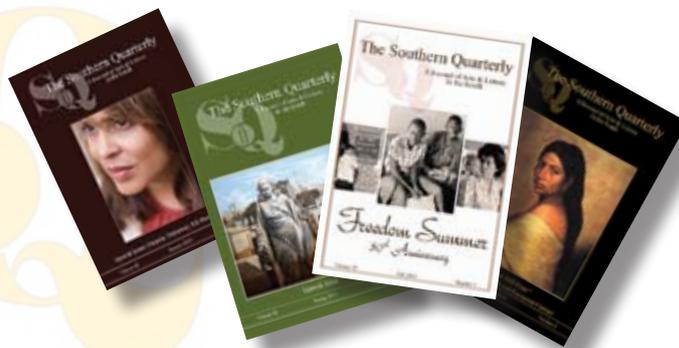
Klan appeared in Northern newspapers, in African Americans' testimonies at congressional hearings, and, eventually, in popular fiction. And scholars in multiple fields have studied minstrelsy; *Stories of the South* goes into detail about the differences among various minstrel shows in the 1870s and 1880s and shows called *The South before the War* and *Black America* in the 1890s.

If I have any criticism of this volume, it is that some of the arguments strike me as more original and surprising than others. Perhaps the not-so-surprising parts are necessary as context for the unique and original parts, and perhaps they are common to works that think broadly on much-discussed topics. In any case, this is a lively, thoughtful, and well-written volume that has plenty to teach.

Ted Ownby

## The Southern Quarterly

A Journal of Arts & Letters in the South



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The Mississippi River and Southern Icons (Spring 2015)

Southern Identities and Photography (Summer 2015)

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*The Southern Quarterly* is an internationally-known scholarly journal devoted to the interdisciplinary study of Southern arts and culture. For *SoQ*, "the arts" is defined broadly, and includes painting, sculpture, music, dance, poetry, photography, and popular culture. We also publish studies of Southern culture from such disciplines as literature, folklore, anthropology, and history. "The South" is defined as the region south of the Mason Dixon Line, including the Caribbean and Latin America.



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# New Biography Examines Elvis Presley against Backdrop of the South

Elvis Presley is the undisputed king of rock 'n' roll, and he is back in the spotlight with a new biography that captures the drama of his career.

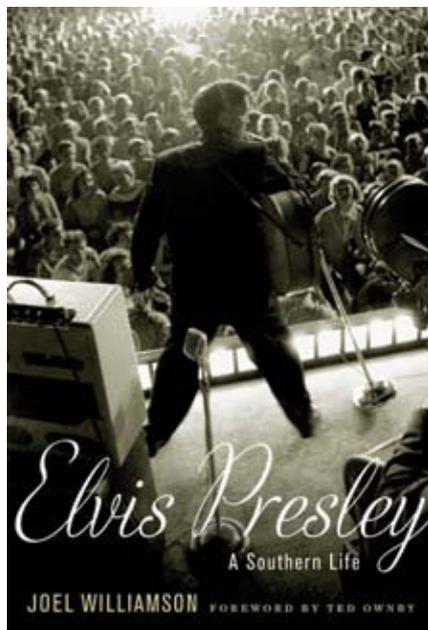
In *Elvis Presley: A Southern Life*, Southern historian Joel Williamson, professor emeritus of the humanities at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, takes on one of the greatest cultural icons of all time.

Center director Ted Ownby wrote the foreword for the book, which is published by Oxford University Press. Ownby, who first became involved as a reviewer for the press, said he is happy to have even a little involvement with such an important book by one of his favorite historians.

“My foreword tries to summarize what is unique about Elvis Presley, when there are already a good number of Elvis biographies,” Ownby said. “I think the two most distinctive things about Williamson’s book are, first, that it emphasizes his female fans about as much as it discusses Presley himself and, second, that it says Presley got stuck as an object of female desire in his late teens and early twenties and never really moved out of that role for the rest of his life.”

Williamson is a renowned historian, known for his inimitable and compelling narrative style. Rather than focusing on Elvis’s music and the music industry, *Elvis Presley: A Southern Life* illuminates the zenith of his career, his period of deepest creativity, which captured a legion of fans and kept them fervently loyal for decades. Williamson shows how Elvis himself changed—and didn’t. In the latter part of his career, when he performed regular gigs in Las Vegas and toured second-tier cities, he moved beyond the South to a national audience that bought his albums and watched his movies.

“The book helps us understand a lot about music and youth and sex and celebrity, all with Southern



roots and surprises,” Ownby said. “And it’s also just a great biography that goes beyond seeing Elvis as a case study or example and instead tells a complicated, fascinating story.”

In the foreword, Ownby writes, “The book left me in a bit of a daze, and in truth, although it is a long book, I wanted it, like a really good concert, to keep going.”

Williamson is the author of a number of landmark works on Southern culture, including *William Faulkner and Southern History* (Oxford University Press, 1993) and *The Crucible of Race: Black-White Relations in the American South since Emancipation* (Oxford University Press, 1984).

Oxford University Press executive editor Susan Ferber will moderate a conversation on Memphis, music, race, and Elvis on Friday, March 27, during the 2015 Oxford Conference for the Book. Panelists will be Ted Ownby and music scholars Peter Guralnick and Preston Lauterbach. Williamson’s *Elvis Presley: A Southern Life* will be a central topic of discussion.

Rebecca Lauck Cleary

## Mark Your Calendars!

### February 18

“David Mills: An Evening With  
Langston Hughes”  
Meek Auditorium  
University of Mississippi

### February 23

Music of the South Concert  
Rory Block  
Gertrude C. Ford Center for the  
Performing Arts  
University of Mississippi

### February 23

Barry Estabrook Lecture  
Nutt Auditorium  
University of Mississippi

### February 26–28

2015 Porter Fortune Jr.  
History Symposium  
University of Mississippi

### February 27–28

Food Media South  
Birmingham, Alabama

### February 26–March 1

SouthDocs Film Block  
Oxford Film Festival  
Oxford, Mississippi

### March 2

“Monsters of Whiteness: White  
Zombie and Plantation Horror”  
Amy Clukey  
Bishop Hall  
University of Mississippi

### March 25–27

Oxford Conference for the Book  
University of Mississippi and  
Oxford, Mississippi

### April 8

“Back of the Big House”  
Michael Twitty  
University of Mississippi

### April 9

Blues Today Symposium  
University of Mississippi

### June 26–27

SFA Summer Symposium  
New Orleans, Louisiana

# Jan Robertson, Longtime Center Advisory Committee Member, Remembered

The Center is saddened by the loss of advisory committee member Jan Robertson. She passed away on November 16, 2014.

“We enjoyed having Jan on the Center’s advisory committee,” said Center director Ted Ownby. “She loved the planning and talking and getting together of our meetings and Center events—she liked to quote Sam Olden that she liked the ‘jollification’ of advisory committee gatherings. She also brought up questions of how Center events could reach wider audiences and address issues we might not have considered.”

A native of Clarksdale, she called Mississippi her home for nearly all of her life. She enrolled at the University of Mississippi in 1961 where she was managing editor of the *Daily Mississippian* and covered the James Meredith riots, earning a Pulitzer Prize nomination.

“Jan was a great and unique talker,” Ownby said. “Once I turned on the radio and immediately knew it was Jan, talking with Michael Feldman on the *Whad’Ya Know* show. And over the years she helped lots of students by telling stories about her work as *Daily Mississippian* editor during the crises over the integration of the university in 1962.”

After her graduation in 1963, she distinguished herself as state editor of the *Delta Democrat Times* and as hostess of *Romper Room*.

In 1979 the family moved to Oxford, where Robertson went to work in the Office of Public Relations at her alma mater. She worked in UM public relations for more than a decade, serving as director of university news and editor of the *Ole Miss Alumni Review*. She later worked as an adjunct professor in the School of Journalism until her retirement.

Ann Abadie, associate director emerita of the Center, met Jan when she worked for public relations and helped publicize Center events.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROB ROBERTSON

Jan Robertson

“From the beginning I discovered that she was always exuberant, had boundless energy, and constantly worked at full speed.”

“Our most significant project was *Covering the South: A National Symposium on the Media and Civil Rights Movement* on April 3–5, 1989,” Abadie said. “Chaired by Jack Nelson, Washington bureau chief of the *Los Angeles Times*, the symposium brought together more than sixty journalists who covered the movement, civil rights activists, and officials of the US Justice Department for the first large-scale review of the role newspapers and television played in that struggle.”

“C-SPAN broadcast the three-day program live to millions of television viewers nationally, and we conducted interviews during and between sessions, providing more than one hundred oral histories. In addition to serving on the planning committee and working on publicity, Jan conducted interviews. She worked on the symposium night and day for several weeks,” Abadie remembers, “and made a significant contribution to the success of

the program and the development of a major archive on the media and civil rights. This is an appropriate legacy for a woman who received a Pulitzer nomination as a student journalist and spent her life working for justice and equal rights in her society.”

A lifelong Democrat, Robertson served as a local campaign coordinator and delegate to the 1976 Democratic convention for Jimmy Carter. Over the next forty years, she supported or served on the campaigns of dozens of candidates at the local, state, and national levels and on the executive committee of the state Democratic Party.

She spent her life giving to others through community service. She served as president of Habitat for Humanity, the Exchange Club, and the American Red Cross. She also led the Boys & Girls Club of the L-O-U Community through a period of growth, and then served two years as state president of the Mississippi Area Council of Boys & Girls Clubs of America. She was an active member of St. Andrew’s United Methodist Church where she sang in the choir.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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

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

**Mark Camarigg** is the publications manager for *Living Blues* magazine.

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

**Rex Jones** is a producer-director for the Southern Documentary Project.

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

**Becca Walton** is the Center's associate director for projects.

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

**David Wharton** is the Center's director of documentary studies and assistant professor of Southern Studies.

**Sara Wood** is an oral historian with the Southern Foodways Alliance. She has a BA in journalism from Columbia College Chicago, an MFA in Creative Writing from UNC-Wilmington, and she studied radio at the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies.

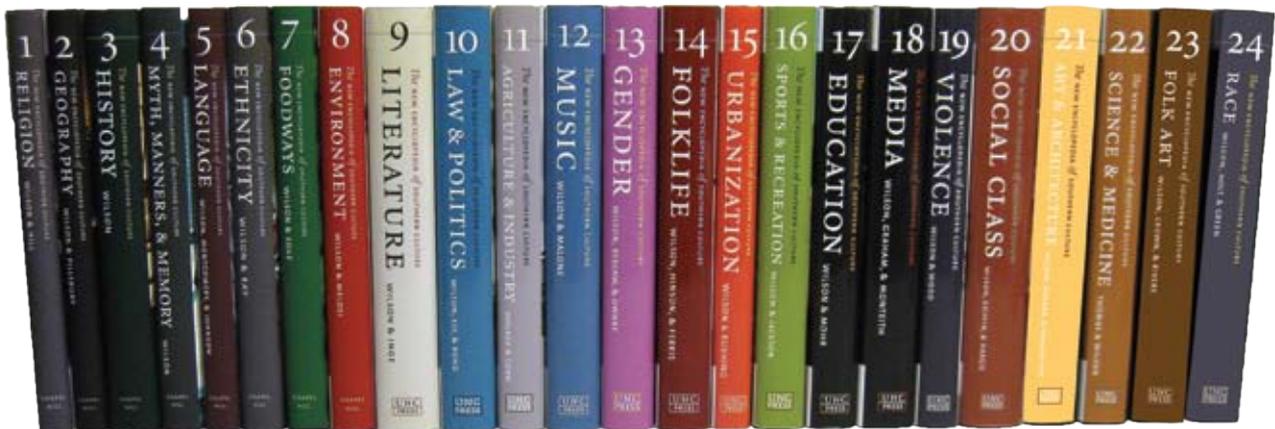
**Charles Reagan Wilson** taught history and Southern Studies at the University of Mississippi for thirty-three years. He retired in 2014.

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**SPECIAL SOCIAL EVENTS**  
**Welcome Lunch—Wednesday,**  
**March 25, at noon**

Hosted by the University of Mississippi Library, this lunch in Archives and Special Collections is a wonderful kick-off event.

*Free, but reservations appreciated. Please return the form on page 31 or sign up at [oxfordconferenceforthebook.com/attend](http://oxfordconferenceforthebook.com/attend).*

**Opening Reception Benefiting the OCB—Wednesday, March 25, at 6:30 p.m.**

Held at the historic Barksdale-Isom Place, this much-loved opening reception is a lively fundraiser with wonderful food, drinks, and conversation between fellow conference attendees and guest writers. A portion of the \$50 ticket proceeds is tax deductible.

*Reservations required by March 18. Please either return the form on page 31, purchase tickets through the OCB website, or contact OCB director Jimmy Thomas at 662-915-3374.*

**Poetry Workshop—Thursday, March 26, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.**

Poets Geoffrey Davis and F. Douglas Brown will lead a poetry workshop, titled “The Daddy Workshop,” in Lamar Hall. As

**Maryemma Graham**



**Phil Klay**

HANNAH DUNPHY



**Sean Brock**

ANDREA BEHRENDIS

**The OCB Children’s Book Festival**

The 2014 Children’s Book Festival (CBF) will be held at the Ford Center for Performing Arts, with more than 1,200 first graders and fifth graders from the public schools of Lafayette County and Oxford in attendance. Sheila Turnage, author of *Three Times Lucky*, will present at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 23, and, Adam Rubin, author of *Those Darn Squirrels*, will present at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 25.

Special thanks to the Lafayette County Literacy Council for sponsoring the first-grade program and to the Junior Auxiliary of Oxford for sponsoring the fifth-grade program. Sincere thanks to Square Books Jr., the engine of the CBF.

Campus visitors can purchase a pass for \$2/day at the welcome center on University Avenue, adjacent to the Grove, upon arrival at the conference each day. Because of new campus policies, conference organizers will not distribute passes during the conference. We apologize for the inconvenience.

The conference is sponsored by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, Square Books, Southern Documentary Project, Southern Foodways Alliance, *Living Blues*, Lafayette County Literacy Council, Department of English, Department of History, J. D. Williams Library, Overby Center for Southern Journalism and Politics, African

fathers, as sons, as poets, Davis and Brown will use Sylvia Plath’s poem “Daddy” as a springboard to explore how to negotiate parenting onto the page.

*Free event, advance registration required, 30 seats available. Register online at <http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/htsdi>.*

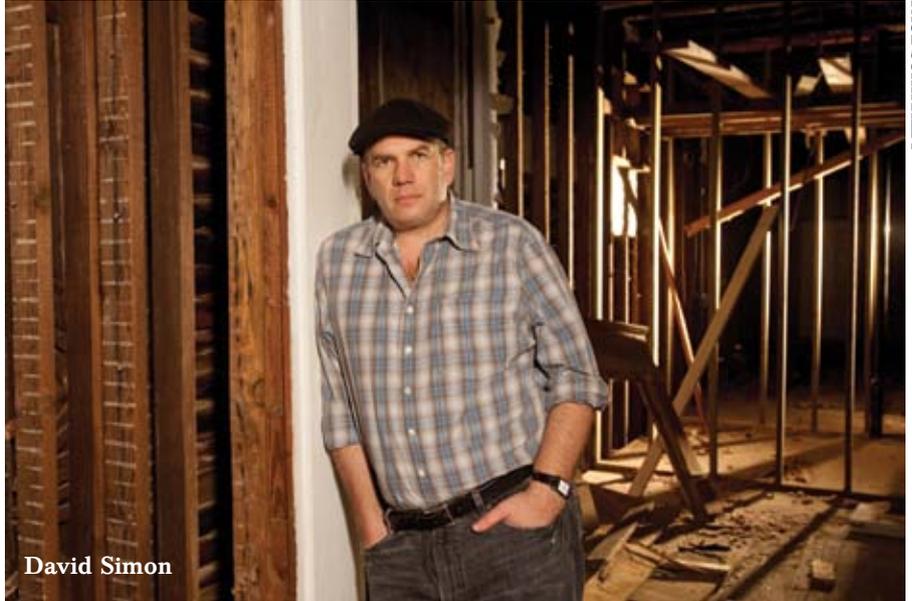
**Poetry Talk and Lunch—Friday, March 27, at noon**

Hosted by the Lafayette County and Oxford Public Library, this lunch includes a talk on craft by poet Barbara Ras.

*Free but reservations needed. Return the form, sign up at the OCB website, or call 662-234-5751 to reserve your spot.*



Caroline Randall Williams



David Simon

PAUL SCHIRALDI

American Studies Program, Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College, John and Renée Grisham Visiting Writers Fund, Junior Auxiliary of Oxford, Lafayette County & Oxford Public Library, Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance, and Southern Literary Trail.

The conference is partially funded by the University of Mississippi, a contribution from the R&B Feder Foundation for the Beaux Arts, grants from the Mississippi Arts Commission and the Mississippi Humanities Council, and promotional support from Visit Oxford.

To see a full schedule and learn more about the guest authors, please visit the conference's website, [www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com](http://www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com) or contact OCB director Jimmy Thomas at 662-915-3374 or by e-mail at [jgthomas@olemiss.edu](mailto:jgthomas@olemiss.edu).

## THE OXFORD CONFERENCE FOR THE BOOK, MARCH 25-27, 2015

The Conference for the Book is free and open to the public, although four special events require reservations.

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- I would like to reserve a spot for:
- 3/25 UM Library Lunch (free)
  - 3/25 Cocktail Reception (\$50)
  - 3/26 Poetry Workshop (free, 30 seats available)
  - 3/27 Oxford Library Lunch (free)

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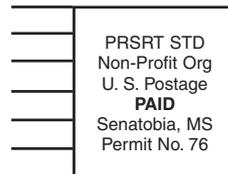
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**You may also sign up for the OCB online – [oxfordconferenceforthebook.com](http://oxfordconferenceforthebook.com)**

*Payments are refundable if written request for cancellation is postmarked no later than March 9. No refunds will be made after March 9, 2015.*



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