

# the Southern Register

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOUTHERN CULTURE • FALL 2006

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI  
1848  
THE QUINCENTENNIAL

## Future of the South Conference in Little Rock

The “Communities, Leadership, and the Future of the South” conference in Little Rock on November 1–3, 2006, brought together scholars, government officials, leaders from government and nonprofit organizations, journalists, and others to share ideas and best practices on the South’s social and economic development. Participants heard of the complexities of communities and the need to be inclusive in bringing together diverse community constituents in planning efforts. Panelists insisted on the need for leaders not just to wait for people to come with community development ideas but to go out and create good projects. And after that stage, community leaders need to be aggressive about getting people involved.

Participants in the conference heard of ambitious projects such as Southern Bancorp, which combines for-profit banking with nonprofit economic development in the Mississippi Delta. Other projects discussed were smaller ones, such as Sister Maureen Delaney’s work with the Tutwiler Quilters. In general, panelists talked of the need for communities to assess their assets, both internal and external, and then leverage those assets to gain additional funding sources. Katie Snodgrass told of how students from the Clinton School are assisting in the revitalization



In 1963, while he was a senior in high school, Bill Clinton traveled to Washington, D.C., as part of Boys Nation, a special youth leadership conference sponsored by the American Legion. The group was invited to the White House, where young Clinton shook hands with President John F. Kennedy, an event that became one of the most memorable of his youth and which sparked an early interest in entering politics. This historic image was used on the cover of the printed program for the Future of the South meeting at the Clinton Library. CONSOLIDATED NEWS PHOTOS, INC.

of one community, Helena-West Helena, Arkansas.

Although many panelists talked of principles of community development in general, there was much discussion

of specific communities, such as Helena. Allen Tullos told of ideas of the Black Belt in Alabama, while Tom

(continued on page 5)

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**IN THIS ISSUE**  
Fall 2006

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- 1 Future of the South Conference
- 2 Director's Column
- 2 In Memoriam: Frances Patterson
- 3 Living Blues News
- 3 2007 Blues Today Symposium
- 3 Gammill Gallery Exhibition Schedule
- 4 Student Photography Exhibition
- 6 Brown Bag Schedule: Spring 2007
- 6 Regional Roundup
- 7 Southern Studies Fall 2006 Orientation
- 7 New Southern Studies Graduate Students
- 8 Southern Studies Alumni Report
- 10 2007 Natchez Literary Celebration
- 11 2007 Oxford Conference for the Book:  
Schedule
- 12 2007 OCB Overview
- 12 2007 OCB Elderhostel Program
- 12 2007 OCB Registration Information
- 13 2007 OCB Registration Form
- 14 2007 OCB Creative Writing Workshop
- 15 2007 Mississippi Delta Literary Tour  
Overview and Schedule
- 16 Writing for the Mississippi Encyclopedia
- 17 One Year after Katrina
- 18 Reading the South: Reviews & Notes
- 29 Southern Foodways Alliance News
- 35 Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters
- 36 Gulf Coast Turns Out for MIAL Awards
- 37 2006 Tennessee Williams Festival
- 38 Notes on Contributors
- 39 Southern Culture Catalog Order Form
- 40 Address Section/Mailing List  
Form/Friends Information and Form

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**REGISTER STAFF**

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**Editor:** Ann J. Abadie

**Graphic Designer:** Susan Bauer Lee

**Mailing List Manager:** Mary Hartwell Howorth

**Editorial Assistant:** Sally Cassidy Lyon

**Lithographer:** RR Donnelley Magazine Group

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**DIRECTOR'S COLUMN**

Danish scholar Jan Gretlund had a provocative comment at a recent international conference on Europe and the American South. He predicted that publication of papers from the conference would be "a tombstone" marking the end of a long tradition of such international connections. He believes that Southern writers no longer engage Europe, and vice versa, seeming to invalidate the need for international study of the South.

That was a striking observation from a longtime European student of the South. I attended the conference *Transatlantic Exchanges: The American South in Europe—Europe in the American South*, September 28–October 1, in Vienna, Austria. Professor Waldemar Zacharasiewicz was a congenial and thoughtful host to some three dozen scholars. The conference itself seemed to belie the worries of my friend Gretlund (whom I think of sometimes as the melancholy Dane). Scholars gathered from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden, and the United States to hear papers on topics ranging from Faulkner's World War I novel, *A Fable*, to the role of cotton and capitalism in Civil War-era connections between the South and Britain, to representations of mining communities in Welsh and West Virginia fiction. We saw excerpts from French films about the South, with wonderfully stylized and sometimes outlandishly stereotypical imagery, and heard mountain ballads.

The relationship between Europe and the American South continues, in fact, to be a healthy one. The Southern Studies Forum, a group of European and American scholars, meets regularly to exchange views, Southern music reverberates in Vienna's cafes and shops, and films still present simplified views of the region. One paper at the conference analyzed African American writer Shay Youngblood's novel *A Black Girl in Paris*, a complex story in which a woman with layers of Southern, black, and American identity confronts Old World prejudice and opportunities. With such voices of African Americans from the South, the range of Southern engagement with Europe is surely different from what it has been in the past but is still raising profound issues.

New Orleans was a recurring site for discussion, and its prominence at the conference suggests to me also the vital international interest in the South, with European influences one of many now. The "global South" is a vibrant term in scholarship on the South. Scholars are exploring the South's relationship to postcolonial societies with historic biracial populations, with New Orleans at the center of such discussions. But the term also evokes a South with many global connections, including Europe. France and Spain shaped the culture of New Orleans, and we hope these influences continue as a part of the rebuilt New Orleans. Europeans continue to be fascinated with the South's racial complexities, its embodiment of a society bearing the burdens of military defeat, and its transition from a traditional to a modern society.

The conference was a stimulating expression of the American South's continued role in the world—and the interest of the world in the South.

CHARLES REAGAN WILSON

*In Memoriam*

**Frances Gregory Patterson**

Patron of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture,  
Founding Member of the Center's Advisory Committee

August 11, 1916—October 3, 2006

# Living Blues News

The current issue of *Living Blues* features interviews with three classic women of soul: Candi Staton, Sugar Pie DeSanto, and cover artist Betty LaVette. LaVette was recently named Comeback Artist of the Year in the 2006 *Living Blues* Awards Critic's Poll. Pianist Barrelhouse Chuck reminisces about coming up in Chicago under the influence of his heroes, Sunnyland Slim and Little Brother Montgomery; and Ronnie Baker Brooks, son of guitarist Lonnie Brooks, is also featured.

On September 28, *Living Blues* cover girl Betty LaVette kicked off the *Living Blues* Concert Series at the Gibson Beale Street Showcase in Memphis, Tennessee. Bobby Rush followed on October 5 with the second show in the series. Make your plans now for the *Living Blues* Christmas Party on Friday, December 1, at the Gibson Beale Street Showcase. Scheduled to appear are Mississippi bluesmen T-Model Ford, Eddie Cusic, and Clarksdale's "Oil Man," Big Jack Johnson. Both Ford and Cusic will appear in the December issue of *Living Blues*.

The Fifth Annual Living Blues Symposium, entitled "Blueswomen Today!" is scheduled for February 16-17, 2007, on the University of Mississippi campus in Oxford. The symposium will include panel discussions, films, an archival presentation, and, of course, live blues music entertainment. A detailed list of guest speakers and musicians will appear in upcoming issues of *Living Blues*. Please check the Web site for details or contact Mary Beth Lasseter at [marybeth@olemiss.edu](mailto:marybeth@olemiss.edu).

Finally, the 2006 *Living Blues* Awards winners were announced in our last issue. B. B. King was named Blues Artist of the Year and Buddy Guy's *Bring 'Em In* won for Best Blues Album of the Year. The 2007 *Living Blues* Awards will be presented at Ground Zero in Clarksdale, Mississippi, on



August 9, 2007, during the Sunflower River Blues Festival. Details of this very special event will appear in future issues of *Living Blues*.

A one-year subscription to *Living Blues* is just \$25.95, and blues fans can subscribe online at [www.livingblues.com](http://www.livingblues.com).

MARK CAMARIGG

## Fifth Annual Blues Today Symposium

### "Blueswomen Today"

The University of Mississippi  
February 16-17, 2007

Dedicated to the late  
Jesse Mae Hemphill

Performers, panelists, and  
speakers include

Memphis piano queen  
Di Anne Price

Delta guitarist  
Venessia Young and  
Pure Blues Express

poet Wanda Coleman

Billie Holiday biographer  
Farah Griffin

filmmaker Robert Mugge  
(Blues Divas)

plus Buzzy Jackson, Gayle Wald,  
Paul Garon, David Evans, Olga  
Wilhelmine, and Patricia  
Schroeder

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

# Gammill Gallery

## Exhibition Schedule

October 16, 2006–January 12, 2007  
Southern Studies Documentary Students  
*Community Photography: A Comparative Approach*

January 15–March 16, 2007 Rick Lang <i>Signs of the South</i>	March 19–May 14, 2007 Tom Rankin <i>Portraits of Larry Brown</i>
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The Gammill Gallery, located in Barnard Observatory, is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., except for University holidays.  
Telephone: 662-915-5993.

# Student Photography Exhibition

In the spring 2006 semester, students in the Southern Studies documentary photography seminar photographed intensively in Oxford and Holly Springs—two very different north Mississippi towns only 30 miles apart. Oxford, of course, is a university town and is currently riding high economically. Real estate prices have sky-rocketed, and there are new construction sites wherever one looks. Holly Springs is more oriented to the past. It, too, boasts a classic courthouse square, though it lacks much of the



Jane Harrison Fisher – *Kids at Skate Park, Oxford.*



Velsie Pate – *Doll Collection, Holly Springs Pilgrimage.*

hustle and bustle of Oxford's these days. Holly Springs also has a number of handsome antebellum homes, some of whose owners open them to the public in the community's annual spring pilgrimage, an event that draws tourists from throughout the nation.

There were four students in the seminar—Mary Battle, Robert Caldwell, Jane Harrison Fisher, and Velsie Pate. Each student photographed repeatedly in both communities. Their assignment was to take a comparative approach: to photograph like subject matter in each

town, then to see what similarities and differences their images revealed. Some of the results were surprising.

At the end of the semester, each student compiled a 25-print portfolio of his/her best images. Working together, they also selected 72 of the photographs to exhibit at Barnard Observatory's Gammill Gallery. That exhibition, *Community Photography: A Comparative Approach*, will be on display from October 16, 2006 through January 12, 2007. We hope you'll be able to come and take a look.

DAVID WHARTON



Mary Battle – *Moving Day, Oxford.*



Robert Caldwell – *Sculpture and Snow, Holly Springs.*

(continued from page 1)

Rankin discussed how documentary work in local communities can expose problems needing to be addressed. Michel Leidermann, editor of a Little Rock Spanish-language newspaper, discussed the growing role of Latinos in changing Southern communities.

Two special highlights of the meeting were the opening and closing talks. Jim Clinton, executive director of Southern Growth Policies Board, discussed the landmark 1986 report *Halfway Home and a Long Way to Go*, detailing its recommendations for Southern development and measuring how far the region has come. Clinton stressed the need for communities to find nearby allies and realize development occurs in regional contexts. The South, he noted, contains overlapping regional contexts, making the South “a community of communities.” Governor William Winter closed out the conference with his talk “Developing Young Leaders.” He stressed the importance of education and the importance of civility in addressing the South’s problems and opportunities.

“Communities, Leadership, and the Future of the South” was a collaborative project of the Center, the William Jefferson Clinton Foundation, the Clinton School of Public Service, and Southern Growth Policies Board. The conference took place in the Great Hall



James L. “Skip” Rutherford, dean of the Clinton School, addressing a session.



Sister Maureen Delaney, SMJM, executive director of Tutwiler Community Education Center in the Mississippi Delta, and Katherine G. Snodgrass, a member of the Clinton School’s inaugural class, during “Sample Solutions in Sample Communities” panel



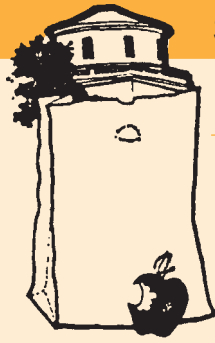
William F. Winter delivering closing address, “Developing Young Leaders”

of the Clinton Presidential Center and included a lecture at the Clinton School and a tour of Heifer International’s new building.

The conference was a project of the Center’s Future of the South initiative, funded by the Phil Hardin Foundation and Center donors. It was an expression of the goal of convening leaders for in-

depth conversations about the South’s future. As Joe Black, of Southern Bancorp, reminded conference attendees, collaborators and partnerships will be key to the region’s communities fulfilling their promise of social and economic development.

CHARLES REAGAN WILSON



## Brown Bag Lunch and Lecture Series

### Spring 2007

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

#### January

- 17 "The Celluloid South: Projections of Southern Identity"  
The University of Mississippi  
Center for Media Production
- 24 "The South and the Mexican War: Reflections on War and Region"  
Greg Hospodor, Assistant  
Professor of History,  
Delta State University
- 31 "The New Museum of Mississippi History"  
Jeanne Lockett, President,  
Mississippi Historical Society

#### February

- 7 "The Celluloid South: Projections of Southern Identity"  
The University of Mississippi  
Center for Media Production
- 14 "Signs of the South: A Gammill Gallery Talk"  
Rick Lang, Director of  
Photography at Crealdé  
School of Art  
Winter Park, Florida
- 21 "Geographies of Desire: Literary Lesbians in the South"  
Jamie Harker, Assistant  
Professor of English

- 28 "Wildflower Watch: The Earth Lady Speaks"  
Margaret Gratz, Gardening  
Columnist, *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*

#### March

- 7 "The Celluloid South: Projections of Southern Identity"  
The University of Mississippi  
Center for Media Production
- 21 "Oxford Conference for the Book Preview: Special Reading"  
TBA
- 28 " 'I'm from the country, and I like it that way': Regionalism in the U.S. South the Dutch North"  
Maarten Zwiers, Southern  
Studies Graduate Student

#### April

- 4 "The Celluloid South: Projections of Southern Identity featuring Bem Jackson's Films, by Popular Demand"  
Marlow Dorrough, Film Editor,  
Director of Freshman  
Mathematics
- 11 "Southern Remedy, Oxford Style"  
Lynn Sloan, Executive Director,  
Oxford Medical Ministries  
Clinic

- 18 "Summertime's Calling Me: Beach Music and Shag Dancing Culture"  
Mark Coltrain, Southern  
Studies Graduate Student

- 25 "Jackets Required"  
John Langston, Art Director  
University Press of Mississippi

#### May

- 2 "The Celluloid and Celtic South: A Confluence of Irish Music and Projections of Southern Identity"  
The University of Mississippi  
Center for Media Production

The Mississippi Philological Association will hold its annual meeting on January 26–27, 2007, at Mississippi Valley State University. Papers are invited on any topic pertaining to language, literature of any period, folklore, film, pedagogy, globalization, multiculturalism, or any subject of related professional interest. Papers on contemporary fiction and poetry are particularly encouraged. Original works of poetry and fiction are also welcome. The maximum reading time for each presentation is 15 minutes. Selected works will

## Regional

*Upcoming Events of Interest*

## Roundup

be published in the 2007 *Publications of the Mississippi Philological Association*. Readers must be members of MPA at the time of the conference. Registration and membership fees are \$45 before December 30, 2006, and \$50 at the registration desk. Submissions—papers (title and 100-word abstract), fiction (entire piece, with a note of context), and poetry (six to eight poems)—should be sent by December 1, 2006, to [msphilologicalasso@yahoo.com](mailto:msphilologicalasso@yahoo.com) or Dr. John Zheng, Mississippi Valley State University, 14000 Highway 82 West, #7242, Itta Bena, MS 38941-1400.

# Southern Studies Fall 2006 Orientation

In the middle of August and just before the start of the fall semester, three incoming Southern Studies graduate students—Rebecca Domm, Sarah Abdelnour, and Nelson Griffin—piled into a car and hit the highway, joining second-year students Kate Medley and Georgeanna Milam on a short road trip throughout some of the region surrounding Oxford. Medley and Milam’s idea behind the orientation trip was to allow the incoming class of students to see and experience some of the places on which their books would focus in the graduate program. Reading about a bluesman traveling along stretches of road flanked by row after endless row of cotton fields might be understood differently, for instance, if the reader has seen and experienced the Delta. The three-day itinerary included stops in Memphis, Little Rock, and Clarksdale.

In Memphis the group ate a delicious lunch at Automatic Slim’s and then walked over to the newly opened Cotton Museum, appropriately housed in the Old Cotton Exchange Building. Willy Bearden, the man behind the documentary *The Story of Cotton*, met the group and spoke about the impact of cotton on virtually every aspect of



From left: Nelson Griffin, Sarah Abdelnour, Georgeanna Milam, Rebecca Domm, Kate Medley

Kate Medley

Delta and swung by historic downtown Helena, home of the Arkansas Blues and Heritage Festival. Upon arriving in Clarksdale they spotted the St. George’s Episcopal Church next to the rectory where Tennessee Williams lived for several years, but then went directly to the Blues Museum. Shelley Ritter, a graduate of the Southern Studies program and director of the Blues Museum, awaited. She

Southern life—past and present. He added that even the stench of the traders’ cigar smoke is still evident in parts of the building. After strolling down the eerily empty Beale Street (it was, after all, still daylight), the students decided it was time to hit the road west across the Mississippi River.

The next stop was Little Rock. Skip Rutherford, dean of the Clinton School of Public Service, welcomed everyone and talked with the group for over an hour about everything from the first time he met President Clinton to the new Public Service program Clinton has established in Little Rock. A tour through the architecturally stunning and environmentally friendly Clinton Museum offered the students further insight into the presidential administration as well as Arkansas history. On their way out of town, students visited Central High School, the site of a momentous step in integration in the South.

Driving to Clarksdale, the road trippers detoured through the Arkansas

gave the students a short spiel on the history of the area and, of course, the blues. When the sky began to darken, they left to settle into their rooms at Shack Up Inn, the former Hopson Plantation, where some of the sharecropper shacks have been converted into rentable rooms for the night. The rooms are still pleasingly rustic and a MoonPie practically smiles at you from your pillow. It’s no surprise to read the guestbook and see that the place has developed something of a cult following. Yet, there was music to be heard so the crew headed back downtown to the Ground Zero Blues Club. After feasting at a table full of fried catfish, fried tamales, fried okra, and a host of other fried foods, the students had a grand finale of an evening in Clarksdale and hustled the next day back to Oxford for a more official sort of orientation to the Southern Studies graduate program.

KATE MEDLEY  
GEORGEANNA MILAM

Mary Beth Lasseter



New Southern Studies graduate students pictured at Barnard Observatory in August 2006 are, left to right, front row: Susan Barclay (undergraduate degree, Georgia State University), Becca Walton (University of Virginia), Miranda Cully (University of Central Arkansas); middle row, Sarah Sheffield (Mississippi University for Women), Jane Harrison Fisher (University of the South), Sarah Abdelnour (Tulane University); back row, Hicks Wogan (University of North Carolina), Nelson Griffin (University of North Carolina), Rebecca Domm (Berry College). Not pictured is Christian Owen (University of Memphis).

# Southern Studies Alumni Report

Southern Studies, an undergraduate major inaugurated at the University of Mississippi in 1979, has evolved over time to include a master's program course of studies as well. Nearly 100 students have majored in Southern Studies over the past 26 years, with more than an additional hundred graduate students completing the advance degree program since the MA was first offered in 1986.

The majority of Southern Studies majors are working in such fields as writing and publishing, nonprofit administration and/or program development, museums or public history venues, events and festival planning, state humanities and arts councils, and all levels of the teaching profession.

Five Southern Studies students from Ole Miss have gone on to complete doctoral programs elsewhere, from Auburn University, the College of William and Mary, Southwestern Louisiana, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Munich.

## Mary Battle

MA 2006

**Thesis: "Just Beneath the Surface: A Story about Race and Football in a Southern Town"**

Mary Battle is working in Washington, D.C., as an intern with SITES, the traveling exhibits for the Smithsonian. She is currently working specifically with a project about the artistic mind of Jim Henson and will soon be starting a project on images of African American resistance. Battle is also working for a public relations firm in D.C., where she is an online content writer for various Web sites.

"The interdisciplinary research approach utilized in the Southern Studies Program is ideal for museum work. Especially after the assistantship I had at the Cotton Museum, I am comfortable in how to approach and gather research for a project from many different angles. Writing and research



Kate Medley

## Sean Hughes

MA 2005

**Thesis: "Honor, Commerce, Suffrage, and Civil Rights"**

Sean Hughes is participating in a three-year dual MBA and City and Regional Planning masters at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "I am focusing upon economic and community development, trying to come to a better understanding of what is happening in the global economy and what the U.S. can do to be better prepared for the increased competition," said Hughes.

Before beginning his work at the University of North Carolina, Hughes received a BA in English from Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, in 2002. While at the Center, he wrote a thesis on the ways in which a Southern understanding of honor influenced social movements during the 20th century, in particular, the civil rights movement.

After completing the Southern Studies Program, Hughes traveled to Africa, where he volunteered for six months with the Wildlife Conservation Society in Eastern Zambia. While in Zambia, he helped manage an agricultural cooperative that linked isolated communities near the Luangwa Valley with urban markets. In addition to linking the two communities, the organization trained community members to produce various crops, including rice, soybeans, groundnuts, and honey, and then bought their crops at a fair market price to discourage alternative income methods such as poaching endangered animals.

"Southern Studies provided me with a good opportunity to make sense of my experiences in Africa and apply a rigorous academic approach to understanding the cultural forms that frequently overlay the political economy of a distressed area," said Hughes. "Studying the South means studying what makes the South different, and understanding this means understanding the relationship

skills are also central to the work with the public relations firm, too. I think a lot of other academic fields involve more narrowed research approaches, so having interdisciplinary experience has been helpful in broadening how I consider these projects."

While at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, Battle conducted thesis work on race relations in her hometown of Conway, South Carolina. "My thesis focused around a high school football boycott that occurred in Conway in 1989 when the varsity coach, who was white, replaced the starting senior quarterback, who was black, with a white quarterback," said Battle. According to Battle, many black football players quit the team, and a black teacher was fired for his involvement in the protest. Thereafter, marches and boycotts broke out which received national media coverage.

"For my thesis I conducted interviews with black and white individuals throughout the town about their memories and understandings of the boycott, and I looked at the role of history, public schools, the media, and religion in shaping race relations in Conway and the boycott."

Battle holds degree in English with a cognate in race relations from the University of South Carolina's Honors College. She plans to pursue a PhD in American Studies with a focus on the South.



between Southern poverty and the social tools that were developed to cope with poverty. I am also particularly indebted to Vaughn Grisham, whose classes on the community and whose guidance were vital in placing me upon the path that I am currently taking.”

**Nathan Kosub**

**MA 2005**

**Thesis: “1+1+1+1=5: San Antonio, the 1950s, and the Sir Douglas Quintet without Doug Sahn”**

Nathan Kosub is working at Fat Possum Records in Water Valley, Mississippi. He received a BA from Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, before entering the graduate program in Southern Studies at Ole Miss. While at the Center, Kosub wrote a cultural history of San Antonio, Texas, in the 1950s, which centered upon personal histories of key members of the Sir Douglas Quintet (the musical alias of the late Doug Sahn). He lives in Oxford and writes film criticism for several publications. Kosub is currently working on an essay about Eric Rohmer’s “Comedies and Proverbs” series.

**Renna Tutten**

**MA 2006**

**Non-Thesis Option**

Renna Tutten is currently working in the Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies at the University of Georgia Libraries in Athens, Georgia. According to Tutten, the Russell Library began as an archive for the papers of Georgia Senator Richard B. Russell. It has since grown to hold collections of many Georgian senators, representatives, governors, political advisors, and journalists. “My Southern Studies degree gave me an edge for this position because my employers were looking for someone with a developed interest in the South and an extensive background in humanities,” said Tutten. “My assistantship with Mary Beth Lasseter doing outreach for the Center was also a great selling point because my current



position involves creating wider access to our collections through outreach programs. Currently we’re hosting a film series about Southerners and technology in conjunction with an exhibit we have about the Rural Electrification Administration (a New Deal program) and its effect on the lives of rural Georgians. If that isn’t Southern Studies material, I don’t know what is!”

Tutten received her undergraduate degree in art history from the University of Georgia. While at the Center, she worked in the Department of Archives and Special Collections at the J. D. Williams Library. She also held an internship at the Georgia Historical Society in Savannah, where she worked with two photography collections and two manuscript collections.

“Working in Archives and Special Collections at the library at Ole Miss showed me that being an archivist is the career I would like to pursue,” said Tutten. She is now working toward a second master’s degree in Library Science from the University of South Carolina.

**Marsha Watson**

**MA 2005**

**Non-Thesis Option**

Marsha Watson manages the Delta Division of Education Services Foundation in Greenville, Mississippi. According to Watson, ESF is a Jackson-based Foundation whose mission is to help individuals go to college. Her

work in Greenville includes providing free college planning, hosting an annual scholarship competition, consulting student and parent loans, and working with schools and other organizations interested in providing college planning services to their students. “To negotiate any system, you have to understand the history and culture that forms that system,” said Watson. “The Delta’s traditions and culture are quite different from my life experience, but the professional experience that the Southern Studies Program provided really served as a training ground for me. But still I am constantly learning as I live here.”

While at the Center, Watson conducted research on education in Mississippi and worked on a thesis project titled “Producing Delta Scholars: Factors Influencing College Access in a Delta Community.” Her study explores how low-income students who are the first in their family to go to college determine which school to attend.

She is a graduate of Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts, where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in international relations and political science. Before beginning her work with the Delta Division of Education Services Foundation, Watson was employed as a consultant for the Worker’s Center for Human Rights in Greenville and directed the education program at the Salvation Army there for two years.

“I am still interested in the how and why of college choice for Delta students,” said Watson. “I am able to do some limited research due to my job, but I am interested in more advanced research and perhaps expanding beyond the Delta to look at statewide higher education issues. After all this state has a college degree attainment rate that is quite low in comparison with other states.”

MARY MARGARET MILLER

**Calling all alumni.**

Please tell us what you’re doing.

Send an e-mail to  
[slyon@olemiss.edu](mailto:slyon@olemiss.edu)

# 2007 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration to Explore Southern Language

The right word can make us laugh, cry, sing along, be inspired. In the Deep South, using the right word is as important as breathing. So says Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln Community College, founder of the annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration and a longtime board member of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture.

“To explore the way we talk and write in the South, the 18th annual Celebration will use the theme of ‘Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South,’” Smith said. The conference, which has won national awards for humanities programming, is free of charge. It annually attracts hundreds of people who love books and the opportunity to talk about them, Smith said.

Conference dates are February 22–25, 2007, with headquarters at the Natchez Convention Center.

A highlight of the conference is a two-part program by U.S. Senator Thad Cochran and David Sansing, professor of history emeritus at Ole Miss. Cochran’s program is called “The Sound and the Fury: Southern Voices in the United States Senate.” Sansing will discuss language used by U.S. Senator L. Q. C. Lamar of Mississippi, the subject of a new book he is writing.

Another conference highlight is a program about famous Southern preachers by Center director and author Charles Reagan Wilson and award-winning author Will Campbell of Mt. Juliet, Tennessee.

Other programs will address Southern speech as used by characters

in the works of Richard Wright and William Faulkner; word play, which was beloved by Eudora Welty; dialect and messages in Negro spirituals; and writings of humorists such as Mark Twain and Robert St. John.

Also to be discussed are lyrics in country music, how Hollywood approaches Southern accents in films, and much more, Smith said. Films, concerts, a play, receptions, meals, writing workshops, book signings, and a writing award ceremony will also be included in the event.

Sponsoring the conference with Colin are the Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and Mississippi Public Broadcasting. Information may be obtained about the conference by visiting [www.colin.edu/nlcc](http://www.colin.edu/nlcc).

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# The Fourteenth Oxford Conference for the Book

## The University of Mississippi • Oxford, Mississippi

### March 22–24, 2007 • Schedule of Events

#### THURSDAY, MARCH 22

- 9:00 a.m. Literature for Young Readers 1  
Rosemary Oliphant-Ingham, moderator  
Karen Hesse
- 10:30 a.m. Literature for Young Readers 2  
Laurie Halse Anderson
- Noon The Endangered Species: Readers Today and Tomorrow  
Elaine H. Scott, moderator  
Claiborne Barksdale, Sarah Combs,  
Pamela Pridgen  
Box Lunch Available from Oxford-Lafayette  
County Literacy Council
- 1:30 p.m. Larry Brown: Friends and Writers
- 3:00 p.m. Larry Brown on Music  
Jonathan Miles, moderator
- 5:30 p.m. *Thacker Mountain Radio*  
Jim Dees, host  
The Yalobushwhackers, house band  
Visiting writers and musicians
- 7:00 p.m. Dinner

#### FRIDAY, MARCH 23

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast with Russian Writers  
Open World Program Event  
Doug Robinson, moderator
- 9:00 a.m. Readings/Remarks  
Ethel Young-Minor, moderator  
Thomas Sayers Ellis
- 10:30 a.m. Poetry: Readings and Remarks  
Celebration of National Poetry Month  
Beth Ann Fennelly, moderator  
Nickole Brown, David Galef, Kimiko Hahn
- Noon Larry Brown Displays  
Larry Brown as a Man of Letters  
Jennifer Ford, moderator  
Jake Mills  
John Davis Williams Library
- Light Lunch Mississippi Hall of Writers  
Hosted by Julia Rholes  
Dean of University Libraries
- 2:00 p.m. Remembering Larry Brown  
Charles Reagan Wilson, moderator  
Brown Friends and Family
- 3:00 p.m. Writing about Larry Brown  
Jay Watson, moderator
- 4:00 p.m. Teaching Larry Brown  
Margaret-Love Denman, moderator  
Jean Cash, Steve Yarbrough
- 5:00 p.m. Editing Larry Brown  
Patrick Quinn, moderator  
Shannon Ravenel

- 7:00 p.m. Catfish Dinner  
9:00 p.m. Open Mike - Poetry & Fiction

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 24

- Morning The regular conference schedule is suspended to allow participants to attend a national broadcast of *Whad'Ya Know* from the Ford Center for the Performing Arts on the University of Mississippi campus.
- Noon *Notebooks* by Tennessee Williams: "Almost a New Literary Genre"  
Margaret Bradham Thornton  
Barbecue Lunch Available from Handy Andy
- 1:00 p.m. Readings/Remarks  
Richard Howorth, moderator  
Carlo Feltrinelli
- 2:00 p.m. Words into Pictures: The Implied Narrative of Modern Painting  
William Dunlap
- 2:30 p.m. Readings/Remarks  
Robbie Ethridge, moderator  
LeAnne Howe
- 3:00 p.m. Larry Brown on Stage and Screen  
Tom Rankin, moderator
- 4:30 p.m. Writers Remember Larry Brown  
Curtis Wilkie, moderator  
Jill McCorkle, Others TBA
- 6:00 p.m. Book Signing  
Off Square Books

#### Other Events

Screenings of *The Rough South of Larry Brown*, *Big Bad Love*, and *100 Proof* will be scheduled throughout the day and evenings on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at the Lafayette County-Oxford Library.

An exhibition of 24 photographs of Larry Brown by Tom Rankin will be on display during the conference. The exhibition will open at Barnard Observatory on March 19 and hang through May 14.

Larry Brown's musician friends will play at Oxford watering holes on the weekend of the conference.

*Whad'Ya Know* will be broadcast from the Ford Center for the Performing Arts on the University of Mississippi campus on Saturday, March 24, from 9:30 until 11:30 a.m. Tickets are \$25 (balcony), \$30 (mezzanine), \$33 (orchestra), and \$50 (orchestra pit). For ticket information and reservations call 662-915-7411 from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except for university holidays, or click [www.ticketreturn.com/prod2/Buy.asp?EventID=16478](http://www.ticketreturn.com/prod2/Buy.asp?EventID=16478) on the World Wide Web.

## 2007 Oxford Conference for the Book

The 2007 program will be dedicated to Mississippi author Larry Brown (1951–2004).

The conference will be the first major event on Brown's life and literary legacy. Sessions will include remembrances by friends, including his editor and several writers and musicians; discussions by critics and scholars who have written about Brown's work; screenings of *The Rough South of Larry Brown* and *Big Bad Love*; "Larry Brown and Film" with clips from films in which he appears; and exhibitions of his books and portraits of him by Tom Rankin and other photographers.

The 2007 Delta Literary Tour, scheduled for March 19–22, will be based in Greenwood and visit Indianola, Greenville, and Clarksdale.

Details about the conference and tour will soon be posted on [www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com/](http://www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com/).



Photo by Jack Cotfield. Courtesy Algonquin Books.

## Registration Information Oxford Conference for the Book and Delta Literary Tour

### OXFORD CONFERENCE FOR THE BOOK

The conference is open to the public without charge. To assure seating space, those interested in attending should preregister. Reservations and advance payment are required for four optional events: box lunch on Thursday (\$10), cocktail buffet on Thursday (\$50), catfish dinner on Friday (\$25), and barbecue lunch on Saturday (\$10). All proceeds of the cocktail buffet on Thursday will go toward supporting the conference and are tax deductible. Participants are invited to make additional tax-deductible contributions to help support the conference. All proceeds for the box lunch will go toward support of the Lafayette County Literacy Council and are tax deductible.

### LUNCH ON FRIDAY, MARCH 23

The Williams Library will host a light lunch at noon for the talk "Larry Brown as Man of Letters" by Jake Mills. To accept the invitation, please check Friday lunch on the conference registration form.

### WORKSHOP FOR WRITERS

The daylong workshop "Mining Your Raw Materials" will take place Wednesday, March 27, at the Downtown Inn in Oxford. The workshop fee of \$250 includes evaluation of up to 20 double-spaced pages submitted beforehand, a private 20-minute session with the instructor during the March 22–24 Oxford Conference for the Book, attendance at all conference events, lunch and refreshments on Wednesday, lunch and dinner on Thursday, lunch and dinner on Friday, and brunch on Sunday. Also, each registrant will receive a copy of *Story Matters: Contemporary Short Story Writers Share the Creative Process*, by workshop instructor Margaret-Love Denman and novelist Barbara Shoup, writer in residence at the Writers' Center of Indiana. The fee does not include lodging. First come, first served.

### DELTA LITERARY TOUR

This special event takes place March 19–22 and is \$475 per person for all program activities, eight meals, and local transportation. The fee does not include lodging.

### GREENWOOD HOTEL REGISTRATION

Rooms at the Alluvian require a separate registration, are priced at a discounted rate of \$155, and may be reserved by dialing 866-600-5201 and asking for the special Delta Literary Tour rate. In the event that the Alluvian sells out, we have also reserved a block of rooms at the Greenwood Best Western, 662-455-5777, or the Hampton Inn, 662-455-7985.

## Elderhostel Program for 2007 Oxford Conference for the Book

Want to know the ins and outs, the do's and don'ts of the writing and publishing world? Sign up for an Elderhostel program called "Oxford Conference for the Book: A Book Lover's Paradise," to take place March 22–25, 2007, during the 14th annual Oxford Conference for the Book. This conference explores today's complex, worldwide book business from the vantage points of authors, editors, publishers, and booksellers.

The fun of being on a delightful college campus, staying in the heart of a vibrant downtown, and interacting with well-known authors, scholars, and inquisitive Elderhostelers will energize you and broaden your book-world awareness.

Cost is \$450 per person, double occupancy, for conference programming, a special Elderhostel-only session with a Faulkner expert, three nights' lodging at a downtown hotel, all meals from dinner March 22 through breakfast March 25, and local transportation.

Elderhostel participants must be 55 years old or older or traveling with someone at least 55. To register, call toll-free 877-426-8056 and ask for program 12317-032207. For information, call longtime Center for the Study of Southern Culture board member and Elderhostel program coordinator Carolyn Vance Smith in Natchez, Mississippi, 601-446-1208, or e-mail her at [Carolyn.Smith@colin.edu](mailto:Carolyn.Smith@colin.edu).

PLEASE MAIL REGISTRATION FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS:  
OXFORD CONFERENCE FOR THE BOOK • CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOUTHERN CULTURE  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI • P.O. BOX 1848 • UNIVERSITY, MS 38677-1848  
OR FAX TO 662-915-5993

REGISTRATION FORM

Photocopy a separate copy of this form for each registrant. Please type or print the information requested.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION/POSITION \_\_\_\_\_

INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

HOME TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ BUSINESS TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

FAX \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

I request reservations for the following:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oxford Conference for the Book - Entire Program            | <input type="checkbox"/> Box Lunch on Thursday, March 22 (\$10 contribution)       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> If not attending entire conference, indicate day(s) below. | <input type="checkbox"/> Cocktail Buffet on Thursday, March 22 (\$50 contribution) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, March 22   | <input type="checkbox"/> Catfish Dinner on Friday, March 23 (\$25)                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friday, March 23   | <input type="checkbox"/> Barbecue lunch on Saturday, March 24 (\$10)               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday, March 24   | <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Writing Workshop, Wednesday, March 21 (\$250)    |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Delta Literary Tour, March 19-22 (\$475)                  |

I am making a contribution in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the March 22 box lunch, the March 22 cocktail buffet, and/or for conference support.  
I am making a payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the catfish dinner on March 23, the barbecue lunch on March 24, the Creative Writing Workshop, and/or the Delta Literary Tour.

**Note: Separate checks must be made for payments and contributions. Contributions and payments made by credit card may be charged together.**

- Check, made payable to THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI, is enclosed.
- Charge to  Visa  MasterCard Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Account Number \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that refunds for contributions are not allowed and that payments for meals, the Writing Workshop, and the Delta tour, less a \$10 service charge, are refundable if I submit a written request for cancellation, postmarked no later than March 12. No refunds will be made after March 12.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I cannot attend in 2007 but add me to the mailing list for future book conferences.

I learned about the conference from (mark all applicable sources):

- Conference flyer from the University  Southern Register  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Posters for the 2007 Oxford Conference for the Book, illustrated with a photograph of Larry Brown, are available for \$10 each, plus shipping and handling and, for Mississippi residents, sales tax. To order, call 800-390-3527. Posters will be available in March 2007.

## Oxford Conference for the Book Creative Writing Workshop March 21, 2007

Margaret-Love Denman, director of the creative writing program at the University of New Hampshire, will offer a special workshop in conjunction with the 2007 Oxford Conference for the Book. The daylong workshop, titled “Mining Your Raw Materials,” will take place Wednesday, March 21, at the Downtown Grill in Oxford. An outline of the day’s schedule is given below.

The workshop is open to 20 writers. The workshop fee of \$250 includes evaluation of up to 20 double-spaced pages of fiction submitted beforehand, a private 20-minute session with the instructor during the March 22–24 Oxford Conference for the Book, attendance at all conference events, lunch and refreshments on Wednesday, lunch and dinner on Thursday, lunch and dinner on Friday, and brunch on Sunday. Also, each registrant will receive a copy of *Story Matters: Contemporary Short Story Writers Share the Creative Process*, by Denman and novelist Barbara Shoup, writer in residence at the Writers’ Center of Indiana. Denman and Shoup also collaborated on *Novel Ideas: Contemporary Authors Share the Creative Process*, a collection of interviews with 23 authors, including Larry Brown, Richard Ford, Lee Smith, and Sena Jeter Naslund.

Denman grew up in Oxford and received BA and MA degrees at the University of Mississippi. She joined the faculty at the University of New Hampshire, Durham, in 1991 and has directed the creative writing program there since 1993. Her first novel, *Scrambling after Circumstance*, was nominated for both PEN/Faulkner and PEN/Hemingway awards. Her latest novel is *Daily, Before Your Eyes*.

To register for the workshop, complete the form on page 13

## Mining Your Raw Materials Creative Writing Workshop March 21, 2007

All artists begin a project with the raw materials of their craft. The sculptor hopes she has found the perfect piece of marble, the ideal casting; the painter looks for the medium that best expresses the vision that is in his mind—oils, pastels, canvas, or paper; the composer searches for the proper instrument to bring into being the melody she hears. Marble, canvas, piano, or violin—tangible objects which, once chosen, shape the finished work. As writers we have no such tangible, *real* objects at our disposal. So, what do we have in hand? Tim O’Brien writes that “memory plus imagination plus language make spirits dance in [your] head.” During the workshop, we will call upon the raw materials of fiction—memory and imagination and language, to discover the stories that are dancing, the ones that are waiting to be written.

MARGARET-LOVE DENMAN

9:00 a.m.	Registration, coffee, and opening remarks
9:30 a.m.	Learning to tell time
10:30 a.m.	Observations—conversation and readings
11:00 a.m.	Moving from memory into imagination
Noon	Observations—conversations and readings
1:00 p.m.	Lunch
2:30 p.m.	Conversation about where memory and imagination can lead the writer
3:00 p.m.	Discovering the necessary language
4:00 p.m.	Readings
5:30 p.m.	Evaluations

During the course of the Oxford Conference for the Book, each participant will have the opportunity to have an individual conference with Margaret-Love Denman based upon the manuscript submitted the workshop. These sessions will be arranged during the course of the next four days. The group will gather for brunch on Sunday, March 25.

Scene at courthouse in Sumner in 1955 during the Emmett Till murder trial



Photo Courtesy Memphis Commercial Appeal

## Civil Rights in the Delta

Journalist Curtis Wilkie in conversation with Patti Carr Black, Emmett Till’s cousin Wheeler Parker, Sumner residents Frank Mitchener and Betty and Bill Pearson, Henry Outlaw of the Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State University, and former Mississippi governor William F. Winter. March 29, 2006.

Color, 60 minutes.

DVD1148 . . . . . \$20.00

Friends . . . . . \$18.00

# MISSISSIPPI DELTA LITERARY TOUR

Experience the place, the people, the food, and the music that inspired Mississippi writers

March 19–22, 2006

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

Scheduled for Monday, March 19, is a bus trip to Indianola, the source for two classic studies—John Dollard's *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937) and *After Freedom* (1939) by Hortense Powdermaker—and home of blues legend B. B. King, longtime *New York Times* food editor and cookbook author Craig Claiborne, and novelist and short-story writer Steve Yarbrough. On Tuesday, March 20, the group will travel to Greenville, home of William

Alexander Percy, Ellen Douglas, Shelby Foote, Bern Keating, Walker Percy, Julia Reed, Ben Wasson, and many other writers—so many that Greenville is known for having “more writers per square foot than any other city of its size.” On Wednesday, March 21, the group will journey to Clarksdale to tour places connected to the life and work of playwright Tennessee Williams and visit to the Delta Blues Museum.

Also scheduled are meals at Lusco's, Giardina's, Madidi, Club Ebony, and other notable Delta restaurants as well as live blues and gospel performances. On March 22, after breakfast at the Alluvian—Viking Range Corporation's boutique hotel—participants will be free to travel on their own to Oxford, arriving in time to visit Faulkner's home, Rowan Oak, tour the town, have lunch on the courthouse square, and attend the Oxford Conference for the Book, which will begin that afternoon.

The Delta tour is \$475 per person for all program activities, eight meals, and local transportation. The fee does not include lodging. To register, visit the Center's Web site ([www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/](http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/)) or complete the registration form on page 13 of this issue of the *Southern Register*. Remember to sign up early. Only 35 spots are available, and they will go fast.

Group accommodations have been arranged at the Alluvian, in downtown Greenwood ([www.thealluvian.com](http://www.thealluvian.com)). **Rooms at the Alluvian require a separate registration** and are priced at a discounted rate of \$155. Rooms may be reserved by calling 866-600-5201 and asking for the special “Literary Tour” rate. In the event that the Alluvian sells out before you get a chance to book a room, call the Greenwood Best Western, 662-455-5777 or the Hampton Inn at 662-455-7985.

## MISSISSIPPI LITERARY TOUR SCHEDULE • MARCH 19–22, 2007

### MONDAY, MARCH 19 - INDIANOLA

- Noon Registration—Alluvian Lobby
- 1:00 p.m. Depart for Indianola—Marion Barnwell, tour guide
- 2:00 p.m. “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Small Town,” talk by Marion Barnwell, at the Henry M. Seymour Library
- 3:00 p.m. “Sunflower County and the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement,” talk by Charles McLaurin, at the Henry M. Seymour Library
- 4:00 p.m. Readings by Steve Yarbrough
- 5:00 p.m. Cocktails and Dinner at Club Ebony
- 7:00 p.m. Depart Indianola, arrive back in Greenwood by 7:15 p.m.
- 8:00 p.m. Reception and Program at Turnrow Book Co.

### TUESDAY, MARCH 20 - GREENVILLE

- 8:00 a.m. Alluvian Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. Depart for Greenville—Jimmy Thomas, tour guide
- 10:30 a.m. Welcome and Short Talk by Franke Keating  
“A Land Not Far but Quite Unknown”: William Alexander Percy's Delta,” talk by W. Kenneth Holditch, program at the William Alexander Percy Library

- 11:30 a.m. Greenville Tour led by Mary Dayle McCormick

- Noon Lunch at Doe's Eat Place
- 2:00 p.m. Greenville Cemetery Tour led by Princella Wilkerson Nowell
- 3:00 p.m. Reception at McCormick Book Inn  
“The History of Greenville,” talk given by Hugh McCormick  
Readings by Steve Yarbrough  
Signings by William Dunlap, W. Kenneth Holditch, and Steve Yarbrough
- 5:00 p.m. Depart for Greenwood
- 7:30 p.m. Dinner at Lusco's in Greenwood

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21 - CLARKSDALE

- 8:00 a.m. Alluvian Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. Depart for Clarksdale—Luther Brown, tour guide  
Visit Little Zion Church and Robert Johnson's Grave Site  
Drive through Money
- 9:30 a.m. Visit Tutwiler Community Education Center  
Making Quilts - A Demonstration  
Gospel Music by Lucinda Berryhill, Sister Maureen Delaney, Mildrette Graves, Allie Lewis, Mary Ann Meeks, Genether Miller-Spurlock, Mary Ann Willis-Mackey, Gloria Young, Peggy Young

- 10:30 a.m. Talk and Reading by William Dunlap
- 11:00 a.m. “Delta Land,” slide presentation by Maude Schuyler Clay
- Noon Lunch at Madidi's
- 2:00 p.m. “The Seasons Could Walk Across It Four-abreast”: Tennessee Williams and the Delta,” talk by W. Kenneth Holditch at the Cutrer Mansion
- 3:00 p.m. Tour of Clarksdale
- 4:00 p.m. Visit Delta Blues Museum
- 4:30 p.m. Depart for Greenwood
- 5:30 p.m. Reception at Turnrow Book Co.
- 7:00 p.m. Tour of Delta art at the Alluvian, led by William Dunlap
- 7:30 p.m. Dinner at Giardina's in Greenwood

### THURSDAY, March 22 OXFORD CONFERENCE FOR THE BOOK OR BUST!

- 8:00 a.m. Alluvian Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. Depart for Oxford (1.5 hours)  
Oxford Conference for the Book, dedicated to Larry Brown, On the University of Mississippi campus, March 22–24

# Writing for the *Mississippi Encyclopedia*

Work moves forward steadily on the *Mississippi Encyclopedia*. Over 500 entries are complete, new entries arrive almost daily, and scholars have promised to write several hundred more. Some categories—Fiction, the Civil War, Politics, Food, and Nonfiction, for example—are virtually complete. Current plans are to finish most of the writing phase this year, to edit and check facts and illustrate next year, and to see a volume, published by the University Press of Mississippi, in 2008.

The saddest problem with the *Encyclopedia* was when funding for the salary of Andrea Odom, who for almost three years worked hard as the project's managing editor, ran out this spring. We miss Andrea, who has moved to another job on campus. The project is moving forward by increasing some of the responsibilities of coeditors Charles Reagan Wilson and Ted Ownby and by relying on exceptionally capable graduate student assistants and some volunteers.

From reading the best of those 500 entries, and from other experience writing for and working with other encyclopedias, I offer the following list of suggestions about writing encyclopedia entries.

- Do more than enough research. Look up everything you can on your subject. If there are several books or articles on your subject, consult all of them. Also, research both the specific subject of the article and its wider setting. For example, researching the life of an individual in politics means doing research in the issues in which that figure was involved and the period in which the figure was in politics.
- Emphasize distinctiveness. If someone makes literature, art, music, or architecture, discuss what is distinctive about that creativity. A few lines about the nature of the

person's gift or accomplishment are essential. If you write about an author or artist or musician, by all means make sure you read or look at or listen to some of the individual's work. Also, remember that the *Mississippi Encyclopedia* is about Mississippi. For broad topics, emphasize what was distinctive about Mississippi, and be sure to use Mississippi examples.

- Say something interesting. If the entry is about an individual, consider quoting a few of his or her words. If the entry is a place, a moment, or a

movement, say something readers will remember. Remember that an encyclopedia entry should teach something and not simply be an extended *Who's Who* entry. Look for things that might surprise most readers.

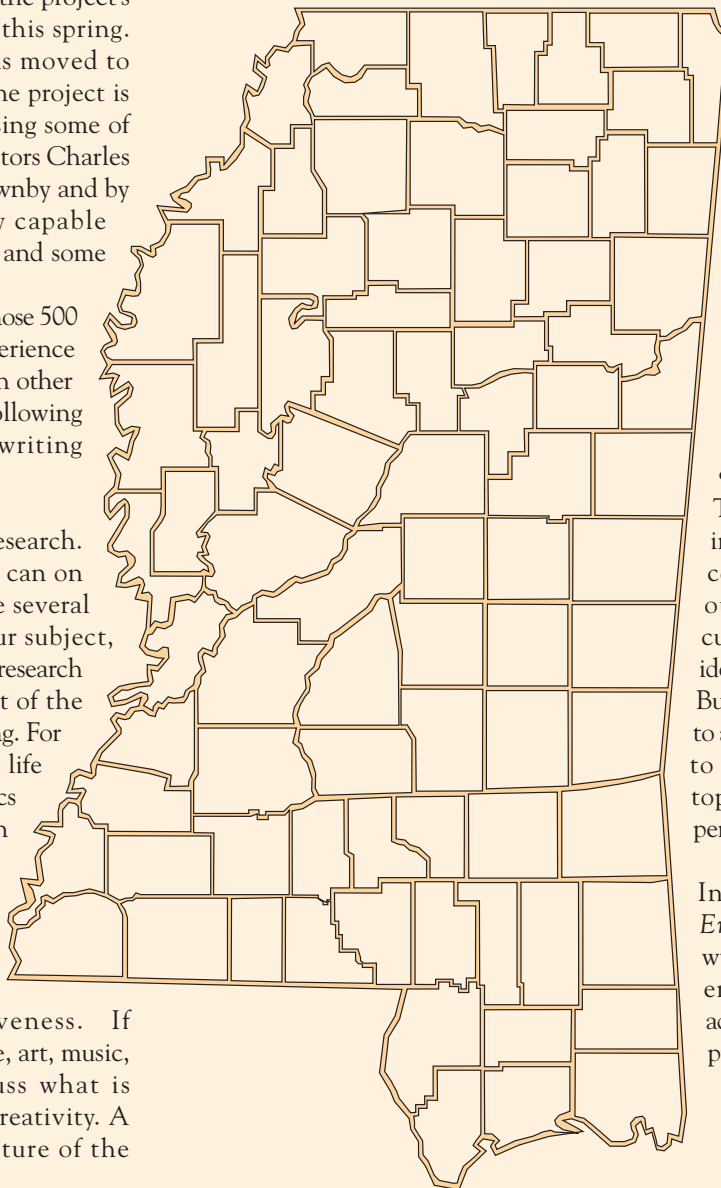
- Use the Internet, but do not rely on it. Internet searches are excellent ways to seek out specific facts or conventional wisdom. But too many Web sites simply copy other Web sites, and too many fail to document sources as thoroughly as a scholarly publication demands. Use Internet sources carefully, and as only part of research.

- Do not avoid the ugliest sides of Mississippi history. Address slavery, racism, violence, and poverty directly. If an individual wrote positively about slavery, or pushed to remove Native Americans from the state, or campaigned on a white supremacist platform, describe that activity clearly and in detail.

- Think deeply, and write clearly. The best recent scholarship should inform encyclopedia articles, but complex theoretical language is out. Authors who want to use cultural theory need to turn their ideas into straightforward language. But, use contemporary scholarship to ask new and interesting questions, to broaden the range of possible topics, and to consider numerous perspectives on the same topic.

Information on the *Mississippi Encyclopedia* is available at [www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/ms\\_encyclopedia/](http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/ms_encyclopedia/). The new e-mail address for corresponding about the project is [meownby@olemiss.edu](mailto:meownby@olemiss.edu).

TED OWNBY





# One Year after Katrina

“The water of the Gulf stretched out before her, gleaming with the million lights of the sun.”

—KATE CHOPIN

I am from Mississippi, but had never seen a cotton plant in my life until I was 12 years old and am more familiar with speckled trout than catfish to this day. My hometown is Gulfport, which was, during my early childhood in the 1980s, a pretty small place on the Gulf Coast. Until late last summer, not many people had ever heard of it. A large portion of my town was destroyed in the storm, and virtually my entire neighborhood dragged to sea. My parents bought the house at 626 2nd Street in 1973. They brought me home there in January of 1977. The night of August 28, 2005, was the last they would spend there. Early the next day, it was all gone. The 1929 cottage was the only home I had ever known.

As sort of an elegy to my family’s house, I began a blog to coincide with both the clearing of the lot and the rebuilding of the new 626. Occasionally, I let my sentimental side get the better of me. Below are some of my favorite entries.

## August 8, 2006

Our only magnolia tree: The lowest branches were probably 5 feet over my head. Buster, our first schnauzer, used to love eating the seed pods from this tree. Annie Rooney preferred the sweet gum balls. Both the red magnolia seeds and the sweet gum balls made excellent additions to the mud pies that I sold in my kitchen (which was actually the short flight of steps off the west deck). Once, I decorated with bird seed and all my pies sprouted.

Thinking of the backyard and the trees and all reminds me of another funny 626 story. One Thanksgiving (or shortly thereafter) we had some of that dried Indian corn hanging on the front door. My dad thought he’d throw it on the neighbor’s roof for the squirrels. Well, because of the mild winters down on the Coast, combined with the amount of leaves and pine straw and,



Sue Cassidy

Steps to Nowhere, East Beach Boulevard, Gulfport, Mississippi. September 2006.

The author, her dad, and the new Gulf view at 626 2nd Street, Gulfport, Mississippi, one year after Hurricane Katrina. August 29, 2006.



Sue Cassidy

will always be mine, you know? I wouldn’t know it, but there must be an odd feeling when you leave a house you’ve loved and known all your life to a family of strangers.

## August 28, 2006

Sometimes all that’s left are Steps to Nowhere. When I was small, you’d still see these steps around on East Beach. Steps that led up sandy concrete paths to rockachaw- and blackberry-filled lots. You could still make out the tiny blue tiles of someone’s bathroom floor or the redbrick crumble of an old fireplace. By the time I was in fourth or fifth grade, more than 20 years after Hurricane Camille, most of the Steps to Nowhere were gone. New houses built in their shadows. Well, it’s almost like we’ve gone back in time, isn’t it?

for lack of a better word, *crap* piled on our neighbor Judy B’s carport roof, that corn sprouted and there was a 4-foot-tall corn plant up there for a long time. I wish I knew where to look for a picture of *that*. Did Judy B ever realize it? In a completely non-tree-related tale, I vividly recall the time ol’ Paps tried to shoot a cockroach with an air rifle—*inside the house*. The BB bounced around the kitchen for nearly 15 minutes.

## August 16, 2006

Sometimes it makes me kind of glad I was the last little kid to live there. It

(continued on page 18)

# The new Southern Cultures Music Issue is here.

**B.B. King  
Elvis Presley  
Hank Williams  
Jimmy Rodgers  
Uncle Dave Macon  
The Carter Family  
Dorsey Dixon  
Doc Watson  
and more.**

**WITH A FREE CD FEATURING  
B.B. KING  
SON THOMAS  
LOVEY WILLIAMS  
TOMMY EDWARDS  
THE RED CLAY RAMBLERS  
AND RARE CLASSIC CUTS**

(continued from page 17)

**August 31, 2006**

This morning I plugged in my iPod, hit the shuffle option, and the first song I heard was "(Nothing But) Flowers" by the Talking Heads. It's like the perfect song to listen to when you've just returned from a trip to the HZ (Hurricane Zone). Here's a little blip of the lyrics from the middle of the song for you to think about:

This used to be real estate  
Now it's only fields and trees  
Where, where is the town?  
Now, it's nothing but flowers.

...

This was a Pizza Hut  
Now it's all covered with daisies  
you got it, you got it  
I miss the honky tonks, Dairy  
Queens, and 7-Elevens  
you got it, you got it.

The second part there made me think of T.O.'s (Timothy O'Sullivan's) on 16th Street. Now that is the tonk of all tonks, people. Fellow Gulfportians, a moment of silence.

**October 17, 2006**

It's been one of those days for me. One of those days when nothing seems to be going right. You know, you wake up with a zit the size of Madagascar. You bite your lip while eating toast. You spill coffee all over your shoes.

But then you open your e-mail and there are more 626 Second Street pictures and you feel a little better. You see the front porch being built and you can imagine all the springtime evenings you and your loved ones will someday spend in rocking chairs on that porch, waving at the neighbors. You see the sheetrock being loaded through a second-floor window and find yourself suddenly Googling "paint chips."

Ah. Just when you think your day is the worst it can possibly be, the thought of the new house makes you smile.

SALLY CASSADY LYON

*required reading for Southerners*

*published quarterly*

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# Reading the South

## *Dunlap*

by William Dunlap. Foreword by Julia Reed. Introduction by J. Richard Gruber.

Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2006. 144 pages, 120 color photographs, foreword, essay, chronology, exhibition history, permanent collections, bibliography, title index. \$45.00 cloth, \$200.00 limited, signed, numbered edition in clamshell box with limited, signed print.

Artist—Storyteller—Magician

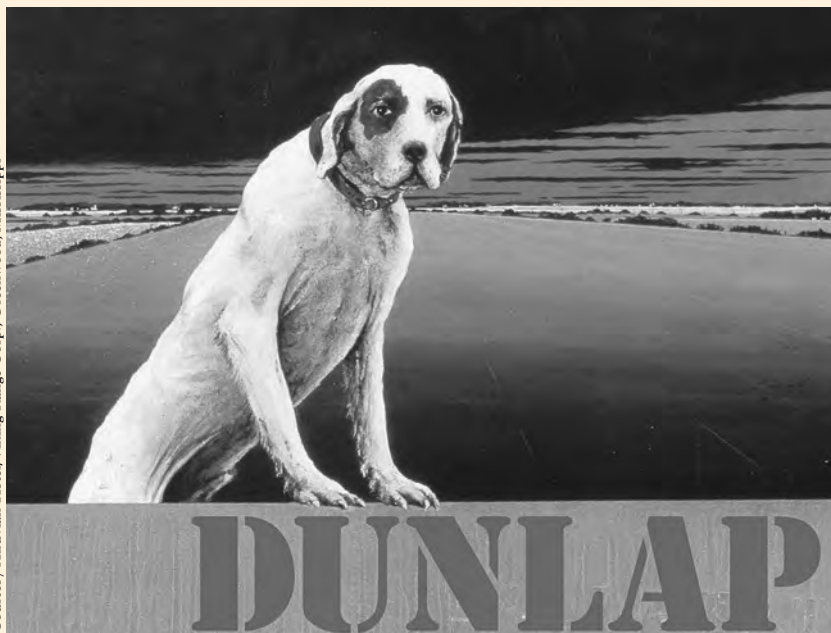
On the cover of *Dunlap*, a new book featuring the work of the artist William Dunlap, a white hound stands at a sill gazing into the window of your eyes. He is poised in the foreground of a Delta sunset, a slash of red lighting the flat landscape below a darkening sky. Is he one of you, an anthropomorphic figure calling for understanding or imparting wisdom? Or is he a canine hunter, threatening you as his prey?



Lisa Berg

William Dunlap in his studio

(left) *Delta Dog Trot* by William Dunlap



Courtesy Alluvian Hotel/Viking Range Corp., Greenwood, Mississippi

Such are the questions that pervade the impressive outpouring of Dunlap's art. "History, mystery, humor, and homage lie between the layers of William Dunlap's 'hypothetical landscapes,'" I wrote, long before I saw the new book. "With a bow to art history and a reverence for nature, he combines his sure brush with 21st-century collage, assemblage, and conceptual message—reflecting the sensibility of a Southern storyteller-gone-cosmopolitan. Dunlap's art is as intriguing and complex as the artist himself." *Dunlap*, with 144 pages of glorious color printing, is published by the University Press of Mississippi.

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

The introductory essay by J. Richard Gruber, director of New Orleans's Ogden Museum of Southern Art, describes the artist's odyssey in clear, lyrical prose.

Bill Dunlap and I emerged from the same little college town in North Central Mississippi, surrounded by ghosts of the Natchez Trace. But I never knew him there. We were of different generations, and I left early.

In the 1980s, researching an article, "The Southern Muse," for *ARTnews*, I discovered some artists across the country—not as a group—whose realistic paintings reminded me of the literary narrative quality of Faulkner, Welty, O'Connor, Wolfe, Percy—the great storytellers. There were similar sensibilities: ironies, polarities, and universal awareness. In various museums, Dunlap's work leapt out at me—very contemporary, but somehow very Southern. Not knowing of his Mississippi roots, however, I took a long time to find him. When we finally connected, I discovered the power of his imagination and the skill of his hands.

Faulkner was, indeed, his inspiration. With his writing about land laced with metaphor and meaning, reading Faulkner gave Dunlap the courage to paint "made up" landscapes, pieced together from reality but presented as pictures, as dream work, not the photographic depiction of specific places. To prove that they are not "real," but are paintings, he cuts grids into the canvas, as a land surveyor might, or hangs an unaffiliated letter from the alphabet in the sky. His landscapes are dramatic, vivid, sometimes surreal, stretched out in a huge horizontal sliver of canvas, as though seen from a passing train. He borrows them from sites in Italy, the Carolinas, and Mississippi, among other stunning scenes.

Portraits of William Faulkner himself show up in Dunlap's early

paintings, as does Rembrandt, the Dutch Master whose portraits in Bill's art remind us of his dedication to and reverence for art. Images of Rembrandt first appear in the 1970s with *Learn to Paint Like Rembrandt in Three Easy Steps* (1971) as a "step" for Dunlap into conceptual art. Studying Rembrandt inspired Dunlap to incorporate portraits of family, friends, even a hobo hitchhiker into his paintings. His late father, Sam Dunlap Sr., who died when Bill was a child, appears in those portraits, as do images of his older brother, Sam Jr., and of the artist himself.

In the late '70s, the portraits gave way to land, with a series called "Off the Interstate"—hypothetical landscapes as seen from highways across America.

As revealed in *Dunlap*, his life and art have prevailed through distinct phases, with his underlying sensitivity its thread of continuity. For awhile he was preoccupied with irises, like Van Gogh, then trout, then, in the late 1980s, "found" objects from nature: a stuffed rattlesnake, twigs, seashells, deer hide, feathers of predatory birds, slate—real relics he says were "charged" in a metaphysical way. Some of the most interesting of these sculptural pieces are odd assemblages of nature and manufacture, such as knives and arrows, inside graceful antique tobacco baskets.

Rembrandt reappears in the 1990s—21st-century work—and most recently, the dogs! Hounds, like those who led his grandfather and friends to hunt foxes, dogs who are tearing flesh, sniffing, pack-hunting, mating—the Dunlap dogs are somehow ominous, juxtaposed against a snowy canvas, or a blood-red sky. The dogs of war?

"They're like a Greek chorus," Dunlap said, at a recent exhibition, *What Dogs Dream*, organized by Georgia's Morris Museum of Art, that opened at the Mississippi

Museum of Art in October. "Dogs, like humans, circle each other. The hunter and the hunted. You never know whether they're going to fight or fornicate."

"Hunter and hunted" became a theme of Dunlap's most ambitious work so far, *The Panorama of the American Landscape*, a 14-panel painting, 110 feet long, commissioned by the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., in 1985.

One side of the painting, inspired by an Atlanta Civil War diorama, is the bucolic snowy landscape at Antietam, site of the battlefield where 23,000 soldiers died in one day. The battle lines are sketched over the landscape. Receding in perspective in a diagonal line across the canvas is a row of bloody, severed deer heads. Stand-ins for those men killed. On the opposite wall is a lush green pastoral landscape with a pair of fox hunters riding fine horses across the land. But in the background, a power plant belches horizontal strands of white smoke across the sky—and in the foreground, the hounds, tearing apart their kill. Hunters, still hunting.

Dunlap's fascination with history, with all of culture, shines through his dreamlike paintings. They suggest narrative, hidden stories. The tranquil surfaces lie over deeper meanings—the beauty, horror, and humor that he, and William Faulkner, found in the South and in all of life, and the humanity that Rembrandt saw in long-ago Holland.

After graduating from Mississippi College in 1967, Bill Dunlap toured the nation as a drummer with a rock 'n' roll band. In 1969 he received a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Mississippi, majoring in sculpture. During the teaching career that followed, he began to study and paint the Old Masters. For nine years he taught art at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, where the mountains and sky produced new

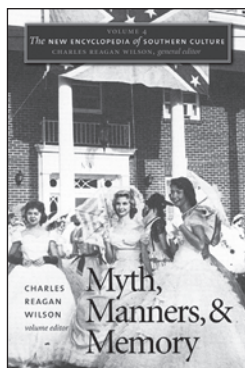
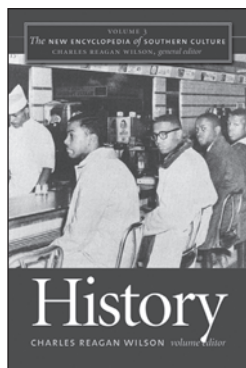
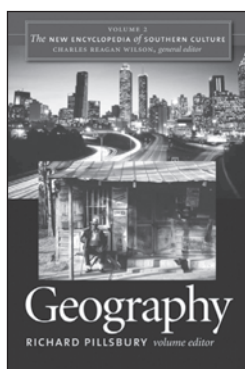
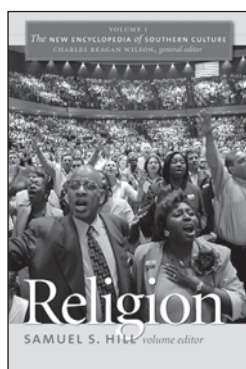
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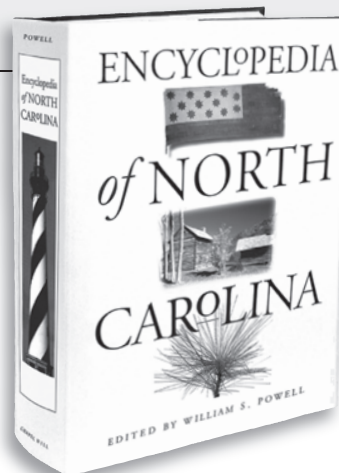
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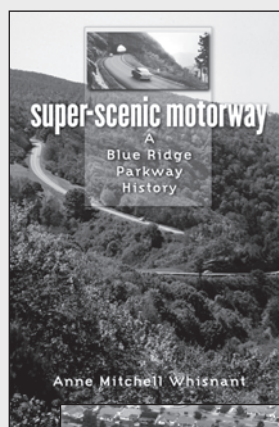
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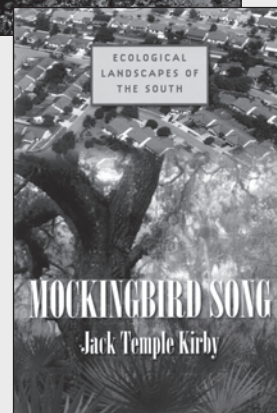
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landscapes, and his paintings began to receive national notice.

After spending a year teaching at Memphis State University, he moved to McLean, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, D.C., to paint full time. He divides his time between McLean and Coral Gables, Florida, along with his wife, painter/writer Linda Burgess, and their daughter, Maggie. He has had major exhibitions throughout the United States and abroad, is an art critic for public television, and a recipient of numerous awards in this country and abroad. *Dunlap* is a fresh, welcome retrospective—thus far—of his powerful work, quest for meaning, and love of place.

MARY LYNN KOTZ

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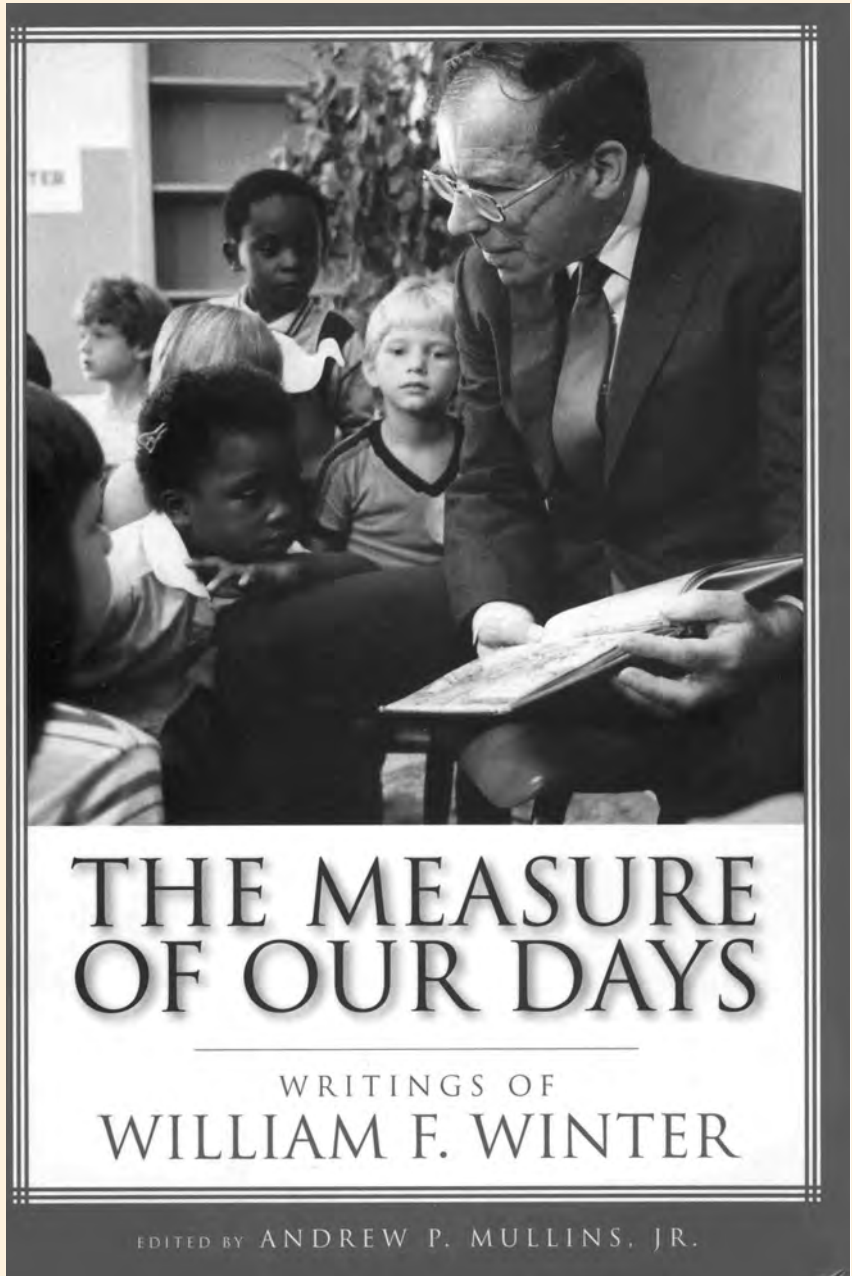
***The Measure of Our Days:  
The Writings of  
William F. Winter.***

Edited by Andrew P. Mullins Jr.  
Jackson: University Press of  
Mississippi, 2006. 228 pages, 13  
photographs. \$30.00.

“A good reporter can’t be concerned about what toes he may step on or whose feelings he may ruffle in his honest, sincere efforts to get the facts to the public,” William Winter said 40 years ago. He added: “A free society can progress only as it has access to and makes decisions based on the real facts about itself.”

I well remember when Winter said it, because he spoke at a June 25, 1966, dinner at the Heidelberg Hotel honoring me after I received the Neiman Foundation journalistic award from Harvard University.

Winter’s remarks on that occasion, which he titled “The Responsible Journalist in a Free Society,” were made, incidentally,



more than a decade before he would be elected Mississippi’s 57th governor.

That speech, and dozens more of Winter’s written remarks on a broad range of subjects encompassing race, religion, education, community building, family literature, and even the state’s black market liquor tax, are collected and edited by Andrew P. Mullins Jr. in a new volume

published by University Press of Mississippi.

*The Measure of Our Days: Writings of William F. Winter* is how Mullins titles the collection, which embodies five decades of thoughts by the scholarly Winter, who today is regarded as Mississippi’s elder statesman and one of the South’s most admired public figures.

Unlike most figures in the world

of politics, Winter wrote all of his own speeches and public remarks, providing a rich storehouse from which Mullins, now executive assistant to the chancellor at the University of Mississippi, has drawn his collection.

While in 30 years as an active politician Winter was elected state legislator, state tax collector, state treasurer, lieutenant governor, and governor, but the game of politics was not always kind to the Grenada County native.

Although he had proven himself to be a competent, trustworthy public official, Winter twice went down in defeat after grueling statewide campaigns before Mississippians in 1979 would place the governorship in his hands.

The rap against Winter, particularly in many rural areas, was that he was seen as too intellectual and didn't stir their racial emotions.

Even after pushing through the monumental 1982 Education Reform Act as governor, his 1984 bid to win a U.S. Senate seat was soundly rejected at the polls, ending his career as an active politician.

Thankfully there was still much work for Winter to do as the state's leading advocate for public education and an influential force for myriad of progressive causes.

Winter's writings and speeches weave a marvelous tapestry of political and cultural life in Mississippi, and of the South, flavored with his keen interest in history. Some samples:

**On the South:** "The nation's most complex region whose past is frequently misunderstood not only by many outside the region

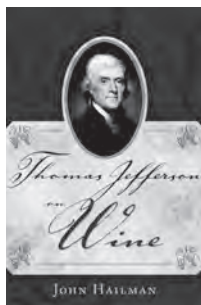


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but by many of us Southerners ourselves. . . . We must now learn from our history and decide once and for all what we want this New South to be.” —October 1993

**A veteran’s view of World War II:** “Without knowing then or even now what all the facts were on which President Truman relied for his decision to use the [atomic] bomb [on Japan], I remain convinced that he made the right call at a time when none of us knew what the future portended.”

—*Journal of Mississippi History*, 1995

**On education:** “It is going to take the full resources of public support to assure educational opportunity for all who must have it if our region is to prosper.” — March 1963

“My experience in getting education reform to the top of the political agenda in Mississippi has convinced me that it must remain there if we are to get ahead.”

—March 1990

**On politics:** “It remains for the practical practitioners of the political arts to temper and to put into effect what in many cases started out to be programs of dreamers.” —April 1962

“In every crisis and in the formulation of every great decision to meet that crisis, it has been the decent practical politician, with his sense of proportion, who has pulled us through.” —April 1962

**On the “black market” liquor tax:** (As state collector in the late 1950s, Winter collected the tax.) “The largest supplier [bootlegger] in the Jackson area included home delivery as one of his services. Once in a mix-up of addresses a large consignment of whiskey was left on the steps of the city’s most zealous anti-liquor preacher.” — from his unpublished personal memoirs

**On fame:** The vigorous 83-year-old Winter tells this on himself: “Ex-governors have a hard time. . .

Recently a man down in Pascagoula looked at me very intently and blurted out, ‘Ain’t you William Winter?’ I admitted that I was, and he said, ‘I thought you were dead.’ I said, ‘No, I’m just politically dead.’”

BILL MINOR

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### **Smonk.**

By Tom Franklin. New York: HarperCollins, 2006. 272 pages. \$23.95 cloth.

*Editor’s Note: This review by Fredric Koepfel originally ran in the Commercial Appeal on October 8, 2006.*

The adjectives “horrid,” “horrific,” and “horrendous” derive from the Latin *horrere*, meaning to bristle or stand on end, as one’s hair does when one is consumed with fear or terror.

Thus, Tom Franklin’s second novel, *Smonk*, is horrid, horrific, and horrendous, the most squalid, fevered nightmare of mindless mayhem and death, gleeful rape and pillage, gratuitous betrayal and torture that I have ever read, and I mean all that in only the best sense.

*Smonk* is a disturbing and compulsively readable novel of the picaresque set between the Alabama and Tombigbee rivers, a desolate area pretty much untapped in the annals of Southern Gothic. For Franklin’s intentions, this desperately poor region, sapped by drought, populated by thieves and murderers, cretins and whores, rabid dogs (“ray bees” say people in the novel), and opportunistic buzzards, is perfect for his tale set in 1911. The story is about Eugene Oregon Smonk, a savvy, misshapen, dwarfish, one-eyed, consumptive, and syphilitic killing machine who,



on the day he is to stand trial for being a general menace, destroys the town of Old Texas, Alabama, leaving all the male inhabitants, bar one, for dead.

By the time the novel concludes, the buzzards have had plenty of opportunities to fill their bellies because the body count is stupendous. *Smonk* is not the only character in the book who lays the brutally murdered out on all sides. The novel is also the story of 15-year-old prostitute Evangeline, who knows as much about killing as she knows about whoring and performs both acts with dazzling frequency. As a result of a case of mistaken identity, Evangeline has fled New Orleans and Mobile to escape Captain Phail Walton, a Yankee and leader of the Christian Deputies, a group of scurvy, ignorant miscreants he imagines to be an army of the righteous.

The bloody wanderings of these (and more) pursuers and pursued converge, fatefully, back in Old Texas, where ancient widows display their murdered husbands on their dining tables and their dead children in church. *Smonk* takes place 46 years after the end of the

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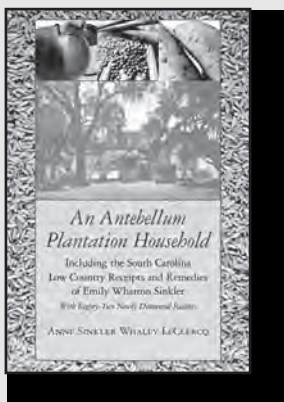
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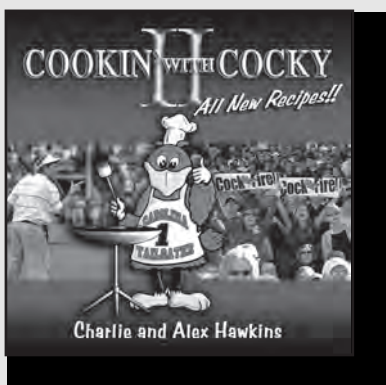
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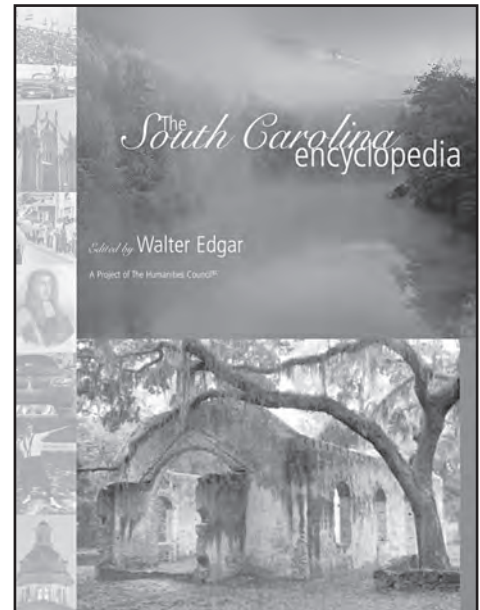
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## Reading the South *continued*

Civil War, and memories of that devastating fratricidal conflict and the town's legacy of madness, religion, and incest fuel much of the novel's sorrow and fatalism.

*Smonk* is deeply and darkly comic, in a tradition that marks American literature from Melville and Twain to Nathaniel West and Barry Hannah; it's like Cormac McCarthy, except fun. The novel's gross exaggerations; its piling up of bodies and body parts; its rich, primitive, and sordid bawdiness; its larger-than-life characters are remorselessly funny.

It's also deeply and darkly lyrical, a catalog of brutal poetry in which blood and innards and sputum become a species of sentient metaphysical imagery worthy of John Donne and George Herbert. Franklin invents, indulges, initiates, and comes up with a language of poverty and rage that writhes colloquially, obscenely, and biblically across the page with the intricacy and purpose of a snake with a mouse in sight threading a field of standing cane.

FREDRIC KOEPEL

### *Mockingbird's Song: Ecological Landscapes of the South.*

By Jack Temple Kirby. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006. 384 pages, 29 illustrations, 5 maps. \$29.95.

Jack Temple Kirby is one of our most distinguished historians of the American South, and his new book is an altogether original one, beautifully crafted, superbly written, and of timely interest. It is the first major book that provides a sweeping overview of the centrality of the environment to understanding the history of the American South.

The book is not a predictable chronological account of the environment's role in Southern history, a comprehensive survey, or a specialized monograph. Instead, Kirby presents a series of connected chapters analyzing differing ecological themes across time. As he states his purpose, his "narratives attempt to understand and present the poetics, politics, and portions of the sciences of the human relationship with the rest of nature in what is called the American South, from earliest habitation to approximately the present."

The book begins with a prologue, most of which focuses on Florida and much of which discusses



Constance Pierce

Jack Temple Kirby

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. These emphases are a start to understanding the character of the book. The settlement of Florida by the Spanish begins the South's story, and it is an appropriate postmodern site that brings the work right up to the present. Kirby easily draws from writers like Rawlings, Zora Neale Hurston, and others throughout the book in developing the cultural role of the environment in the South. Chapters deal with such topics as the South's Native Americans, plantation society, the common folks and their open lands, the relationship of Southerners to animals, the enchantment of nature, and the ecological equilibrium between the environment and urbanization. Stating the chapter themes this way, though, diminishes the careful construction of their flow. Kirby presents interrelated narratives, which include wonderfully done set pieces that are often about unintended consequences of environmental actions. The book appears artless, but it is developed with the gifts of a fine writer. Kirby uses foreshadowing, indirections, allusions, metaphor, witty asides, ironic juxtapositions, all within a graceful style. He roams the Southern countryside, with a perceptive eye, an

ironic voice, and confident judgments. He makes learned connections between the South's environment and the ecologies of Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. He stands in ethical judgment of the environmental waste and brutality of many environmental actions in the South, past and present, but he is empathetic with decisions plain folk Southerners have had to make in the context of often limited options.

Kirby's perspective is a balanced one. He has a strong argument to make, namely that the South's environmental history suggests blurring of ethical issues about what is necessity and "especially the consequences of accumulated delights." Kirby strikes this note early in the book, and the argument subtly interweaves throughout the chapters, becoming clearer in the epilogue. He makes effective use of broad interdisciplinary research that makes his book relevant to students of history, geography, cultural studies, and ecological studies. He draws his evidence from historical accounts, fiction, memoirs, biographies, poetry, letters, films, and governmental and scientific studies. This is a significant scholarly work, but also a great read.

CHARLES REAGAN WILSON

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***Études Faulknériennes V:  
Eudora Welty and the  
Poetics of the Body.***

Edited by Géraldine Chouard and Danièle Pitavy-Souques. Rennes, France: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2005. 183 pages. 15 Euros paper.

"Eudora Welty: The Poetics of the

Body" was the title of a 2002 conference held in Rennes under the auspices of the Faulkner Foundation. Concurrently, the exhibition *Mississippi, 1930s: The Photographs of Eudora Welty* was staged in the Rennes City Hall, "its strong white columns, on which the photographs hung, bringing Southern architecture unmistakably to mind." According to French scholar Géraldine Chouard, "But for a few details, it could have been in Jackson, Mississippi, in the 1930s."

This new essay collection, edited by the conference chairs, is a unique legacy of the international meeting. Chouard and Pitavy-Souques expanded upon the proceedings by including previously unpublished articles by other Welty scholars. As a result, the book offers many variations on the "body" motif, from Donald Kartiganer's philosophical "Body and Myth, Semiotic and Symbolic: The Space Between" to Hunter Cole's personal account of working with Miss Welty to produce her striking volume *Photographs*. Cole's essay is grouped with four others on Welty and photography, including one by Michael Kreyling on photographic portraits of the author herself. This section also reproduces three of Welty's Depression-era photos, along with an intriguing round table discussion of photography from the Rennes conference.

Other scholars provide fresh insights on the fiction, with occasional reference to Welty's memoir, *One Writer's Beginnings*. Peggy Whitman Prenshaw describes missed opportunities for communion between "passionate observers" and "multiple life-savers." Suzan Harrison discusses several works in which the potential for interracial connection, in particular, is "thwarted, refused, and lost" by white characters. More hopefully, Susan V. Donaldson remarks upon "the possibility of

discovery” in “Embodying and Transforming Memory in Eudora Welty’s *Later Work*.” Several contributors treat a single Welty work. In the one essay printed in French, Marie-Christine Lemardeley considers the sounds of silence in “The Key,” a little-known short story. Noel Polk takes an unconventional approach to the well-known *Ponder Heart*, which he considers “the oddest book in the Welty canon” for its disconcerting juxtapositions of comedy with “some grimmer realities about family violence.” Thomas L. McHaney’s treatment of blues music and narrative in “Powerhouse” is both playful and profound. Challenging Welty’s own low opinion of “The Burning,” André Bleikasten presents her sole Civil War story as “a glorious revenge of the ‘small form’ on the master narratives of her elders.” Pearl McHaney finds another sort of violence in the “breaking of taboos” in *Delta Wedding*, with particular attention to Dabney Fairchild’s “gravity.” Barbara Ladd’s essay is likewise concerned with “The Space of Woman’s Body,” this time in *Golden Apples*.

Other essayists represented in this fine collection are Chouard, Pitavy-Souques, Sharon Baris, Aurélie Guillain, Jean Kempf, Stuart Kidd, Jean-Marc Victor, and Michiko Yoshida. Unfortunately, the physical body of the book is not as strong as the intellectual content: half of the pages in my copy separated from the spine as I read. Welty recalled the ill-bound series books of her youth with humor and affection in the essay “A Sweet Devouring.” Her fans will follow her adventurous lead.

JOAN WYLIE HALL

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***Last of the Red Hot Poppas.***

By Jason Berry. Seattle: Chin Music Press, 2006. 302 pages. \$24.50 cloth.

Like its cuisine, Louisiana’s politics are highly seasoned, and Jason Berry gets it just right in this jambalaya of a novel concerning high corruption and lowly scoundrels.

The story opens with the mysterious death of Gov. Rex LaSalle, a fictional amalgam created with a strong potion of Edwin W. Edwards, a former governor now residing in a federal penitentiary, and a dash or two of the Brothers Long—The Kingfish and Uncle Earl. Though LaSalle’s naked and lipstick-besmirched corpse is uncovered on a bed in the governor’s mansion on the second page, his ghost lingers throughout the book, hovering over a cast of outlandish characters including drunk and/or crooked legislators, sultry women, righteous black ministers, and foot soldiers for the Mafia. (There’s a cameo role for a capo called Rompallo, who bears more than a resemblance to the late don of New Orleans, Carlos Marcello.)

Amid so many conniving figures, evil is best personified by the oil and gas barons—latter day replicas of the men Huey P. Long fought—who dwell in the shadows with a mission to pump toxic oil waste back into the soil.

The tale plays out with an investigation into the governor’s murder and a squabble over who will succeed him. But, ultimately, as one minor politico says, “It’s all about money. Feds are tracking everybody. Run for office in this state, your life turns into a hunt. Weird people, the kind you’d never eat with on purpose, turn up. You call ’em supporters. The money I

spent, God knows where we got half of it.”

When another man is asked who will become the next governor, he replies: “Some thief or another.”

Money, of course, has flowed for years from Big Oil, which plunders the Gulf Coast, pollutes its people, and puts money in the pockets of the politicians. The skies over Baton Rouge are a testament to Big Oil’s power; refineries burn there with the impunity of hell itself. Thus, an aide to the governor is pleased when the sky turns blue for LaSalle’s funeral. “He had persuaded Exxon to cut the smokestacks to clear air for the services.”

Laconic lines like this drive the narrative; lines such as the one where an FBI agent is told, “Your problem is deciding who not to indict.” This is, after all, a state where a recent roster of convicts included a governor, an attorney general, an elections commissioner, an agriculture commissioner, three insurance commissioners, a congressman, a Federal judge, a state Senate president, and sundry local officials.

Berry, a New Orleans writer, gained renown for his work tracking sexual predators among the Roman Catholic clergy a decade before the issue became a national scandal. He has also followed Louisiana politics through much of its modern, inglorious history and has a good eye for its humor and exotica.

It seems serendipitous that Berry’s first novel coincided with the nonfiction discovery by federal agents of \$100,000 in cold cash stowed away in a freezer in the home of the city’s congressman, William Jefferson.

CURTIS WILKIE



# SOUTHERN FOODWAYS REGISTER

The Newsletter of the Southern Foodways Alliance

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"Down in Mobile they're all crazy," Eugene Walter wrote in *An Untidy Pilgrim*, "because the Gulf Coast is the kingdom of monkeys, the land of clowns, ghosts and musicians, and Mobile is sweet lunacy's county seat."

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## Upcoming SFA Events

November 29, 2006: The New Orleans Table: Return and Recollect, in concert with Tabasco in San Francisco, California.

December 5, 2006: Secret Foods of the South Dinner at Zingerman's Roadhouse, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

January 5–6, 2007: SFA Films Happy Hour and Documentary Dinner at Woodfire Grill, Atlanta, Georgia.

February 22–24, 2007: Taste of the South, showcasing the region's best chefs and artisans, Blackberry Farm, Walland, Tennessee.

April 20–21, 2007: Camp Muscle Shoals, Alabama, in concert with Project Alabama and other cool folks.

June 22–24, 2007: Charleston, South Carolina, Field Trip.

## Letter from the President

I teach a course about food and American culture at the University of North Carolina called "Cooking up a Storm." Each week we talk about the power of food as an expression of American identity, and we note how often food appears at the center of our nation's struggles and joys. Consider the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita and how many times you heard about people "cooking up a storm" of red beans and rice mixed with anger, grief, and dedication to restore the rich cultural worlds of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast that we love so deeply. As you know, the SFA stands at the center of efforts to support our fellow chefs, cooks, and restaurateurs as they rebuild their lives and businesses. And if that were not enough on our already full plates (it's the South, after all), exciting new initiatives are under way at the SFA. Let me highlight these activities for you.

Thanks to new funders—National Peanut Board, Tabasco, The Catfish Institute, and Whole Foods—not to mention the stalwart corporations and foundations that have supported us from the beginning, we hired the indomitable Mary Beth Lasseter as a full-time associate director. Another member of our stellar SFA team, award-winning oral historian Amy Evans, recently became a permanent staff member of the SFA.

Also on board and charged with external relations is part-time employee Melissa Hall, who distinguished herself as mistress of our deviled egg contest, and now coordinates the exciting series of New Orleans events we are staging across the country. We continue to work closely with Joe York and Andy Harper of the Center for Documentary Projects, an affiliated institute here at the University of Mississippi. Joe and Andy will produce ten SFA short-form documentaries in the coming twelve months. (That's right ten! Who said Southerners move slowly?)

And while I have your attention—on behalf of the board of directors, I want to offer heartfelt thanks to Elizabeth Sims as she ends her presidency of SFA. Elizabeth's inspired leadership, her never-waver-from-the-mission thinking, her business savvy, and her fine sense of humor have immeasurably strengthened SFA. We are so grateful for all she has brought SFA, not the least of which were the fine cases of Biltmore wine and champagne. Thank you, Ms. Elizabeth.

And lastly, please note our calendar on this page. We offer you more opportunities than ever to get involved in an SFA event. So please join us at the table.

Marcie Cohen Ferris  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina



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*Sweetness on the State Line: A Chronicle of Candy-Making in Bristol, Virginia* will be a featured exhibition at East Tennessee State University's B. Carroll Reece Museum in Johnson City, October 9, 2006, through January 31, 2007. The exhibition is an outgrowth of a class project in the University's "Foodways of Appalachia" course, by Lisa Elliott of Kingsport, a student in the master of arts in liberal studies program. It documents the history of candy companies in Bristol dating to 1909 and is part of Bristol's sesquicentennial celebration.

HENRY MENCKEN

# Channeling Eugene: Chef Linton Hopkins as Medium

Every night around 10 p.m., chef Linton Hopkins of Restaurant Eugene in Atlanta, Georgia, makes the rounds through his small, elegant dining room. He enjoys connecting with patrons and is most likely accustomed to the occasional zealous diner, fueled by good wine and food, gushing appropriately and shaking hands. On one particular night, however, there was a table that seemed different; one of the diners went to the bar, ordered half a dozen bottles of cold beer, and promptly elbowed his way through to the small kitchen to pass them out to the chefs, line cooks, and dish washers. Another shook Linton's hand and gave him the charge, "You should create a meal dedicated to Eugene Walter—'Eugene on Eugene.'" Linton had never heard of Southern writer and bon vivant Eugene Walter, but to have something so abstract thrown at him by an appreciative eater was enough to set him into action.

It seems that Walter, a novelist, actor, translator, poet, entertainer, and

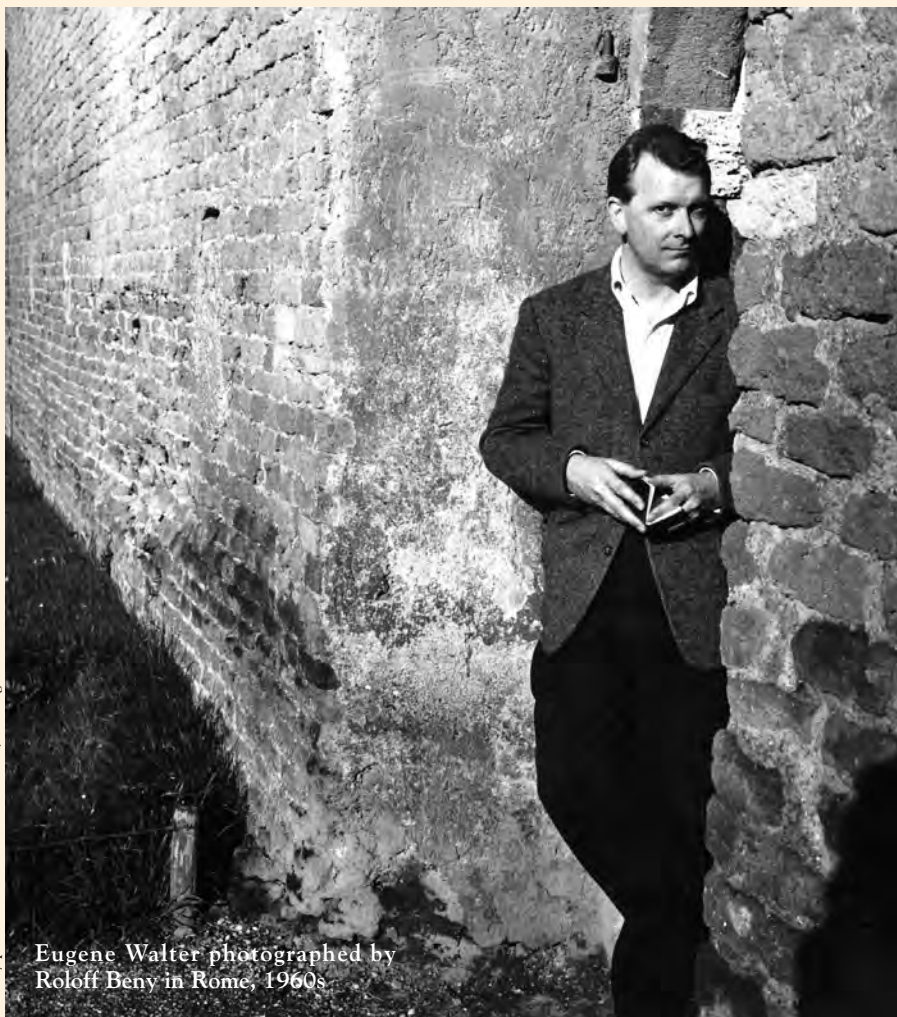


Used by permission of Donald Goodman, the Eugene Walter Estate



Used by permission of Donald Goodman, the Eugene Walter Estate

great home cook, did not have much in common with Eugene Holeman, Linton's grandfather for whom the restaurant is named, but they do share the name and a great appreciation for Southern food and humor. Linton is a native Atlantan who spent summers in Memphis with his grandparents, Elizabeth and Eugene Holeman. "Elizabeth taught me behavior those summers. If my elbows were on the table, I would get a swift kick to the shin under the table. My grandfather, Eugene, was a smart man, a chemist, and for many years was president of the FDA in Tennessee. He was fun, loved humor and gardening and food. We always enjoyed Sunday dinner growing up. The family was the table and that was deep. We always celebrate with food." That depth of communion led Linton to attend the Culinary Institute of America, and after years of honing his craft in kitchens in New Orleans and Washington, D.C., Linton and his wife, Gina, moved back to his



Eugene Walter photographed by Roloff Beny in Rome, 1960s

as a result of his beautiful language and his attention to the people and places behind the food—the soul of the food. It is through the love of the “depth of the table” that Linton feels the bond of the two Eugenes, and that is what drove him to create his Tribute to an Untidy Pilgrim, the Viking Range lunch on Saturday of the symposium.

Incidentally, that night at Restaurant Eugene—the night when Linton found out about Eugene Walter—was also the night that Linton was introduced to the SFA. That table, in the center of his restaurant, was filled with enthusiastic members. Linton has now done enough research on Walter to pen his own biography of the man, but he would rather bring him to us via the plate. “I was given the gift of a person, and that knowledge makes me better. Restaurant Eugene is not Restaurant Linton Hopkins; I have to know the person I am honoring and the people I am cooking for. Bringing the ‘Eugenes’ to the table is about channeling memories, humor, and respect.” Find out more about Restaurant Eugene at [www.restauranteneugene.com](http://www.restauranteneugene.com).

ANGIE MOSIER

hometown, Atlanta, to open their own restaurant—Restaurant Eugene.

Eugene Walter (1921–1998) was a literary man who grew up in Mobile, Alabama, lived in Paris and Rome for much of the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, then moved back to Mobile in 1979. He seemed to know everyone in the literary, artistic, and entertainment worlds, and his dinner guests feasted on collard greens, spoon bread, and grits at his Roman table. Numerous prizes were bestowed upon Walter for his short stories, poetry, and novels. He dabbled in songwriting and became an actor by accident; his character was so large that directors could not resist him. He appears in a score of films, most notably in Federico Fellini's *8 1/2* (1963). His food writing was another happy accident, beginning with a letter to a friend describing a wonderful New York restaurant. That letter ended up being published in the *Herald-Tribune*. Walter's food writing career flourished



Eugene Walter photographed by Peter Bloch in Rome, 1960s

# Delectable Dishes and Dainty Gluttons: Eugene Walter's Cookbooks

On Saturday morning at the 2006 SFA symposium, Don Goodman, executor of Eugene Walter's estate, moderated a panel discussion, "At Table with Eugene Walter." Members of the panel were Michael Batterberry, founding editor with his wife, Ariane, of *Food Arts*, who knew Eugene Walter in Rome, and Jack Pendarvis, a native of Bayou La Batre, Alabama, a friend of Walter's in Alabama.

Eugene Walter wrote only three books that are primarily cookbooks, but observations about the food and cooking of his native South, particularly Mobile, where he grew up, also run through his novel *The Untidy Pilgrim* and his as-told-to-Katherine-Clark reminiscence *Milking the Moon: A Southerner's Story of Life on This Planet*.

The best known of his cookbooks is *American Cooking: Southern Style* in the Time-Life Foods of the World series. Widely thought to be among the best of the series, it is, unfortunately, no longer in print but is fairly frequently available from used book stores and search services. *Delectable Dishes from Termite*

*Hall: Rare and Unusual Recipes* (1982) is available from The Bookshop, 262 Sutherland Bluff Drive, Eulonia, GA 31331 (telephone 912-832-6352) for \$18.50 plus \$3.50 for shipping. (Owner Virginia Hobson Hicks, a childhood friend of Eugene Walter, has offered SFA members who order the book directly from the store a 25 percent discount.) *Hints and Pinches: A Concise Compendium of Herbs and Aromatics with Illustrative Recipes and Asides on Relishes, Chutneys, and Other Such Concerns* (1991) is available in a new edition (\$5.99 at [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)), with a forward by John T. Edge. The book is as eccentric as Eugene Walter himself, a compendium of folklore, cooking hints, and recipes, organized alphabetically from Achioté, which Eugene uses in his red rice recipe, to Yellow Jessamine, a deadly poison.

Eugene Walter frequently makes the point in his writings about cooking that

the Mobile he grew up in was a port city and its cooking was influenced by France, Spain, England, Africa, the Caribbean, and Native Americans. He learned about good food at an early age from his grandfather, who owned an import/export produce business, and his grandmother, a fine cook. His own awareness of these disparate influences that formed the Mobile cooking of his youth was increased by his years in Paris and Rome, where he ate fried chicken and turnip greens with Leontyne Price and served mint juleps to Judy Garland.

The book that best encapsulates Eugene Walter's attitude towards food is *Delectable Dishes from Termite Hall*. It shows his deep Southern roots, his whimsy, his knowledge of French and Italian cooking. Here, from *Delectable Dishes* by permission of Donald Goodman, is Eugene Walter's recipe for Pot Likker.

THOMAS HEAD

## Pot Likker

Take a day off and wash wash wash 3 or 4 big bunches of fresh (yes, I said fresh) turnip greens, younger the better. Then sit down and pluck the leaves from the stems, discarding any discolored or wounded bits. This takes time. Sit down, put on some Mozart. In your big heavy pot put a nut of unsalted butter over low heat, then put in 2 strips lean bacon, finely chopped, 1 unpeeled garlic toe, 1 or 2 chopped onions, 1 or 2 or 3 dried hot red little devil peppers, 1 bay leaf, 1/2 tsp. grated lemon peel, any old ham scraps or bones. When bacon and onions are about cooked, put in the greens, torn, not cut, into bits. Simmer simmer simmer for about 1 hour over low heat. Stir once in awhile. When it looks and tastes

right, strain the greens through a colander. Remove any unsightly bones and the garlic clove, then save the mound of greens to serve with pork sausage and corn bread. Strain the broth through a cloth and put aside to serve in the evening with Vanishing Bread. Taste Pot Likker for flavorings, adjust. I usually put a sprinkle of finely-chopped celery

heart leaves as a garnish. Serve hot hot hot. The meal might start with the Likker. Then the greens, chopped and turned out from a ring mould, surrounded with sausage and centered with hard-boiled eggs halved and daubed with Creole or Dijon mustard, might be the main dish.

EUGENE WALTER





# The Gulf South by the Book: New Writing by 2006 Symposium Participants

Florida figures large in any consideration of the food of the Gulf South. Gary Mormino's book, *Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams: A Social History of Modern Florida* (University Press of Florida, 2005, \$24.95), is not specifically about Florida foodways, but food figures large in the social history of a state that produces "more oranges, tomatoes, sugarcane, grapefruit, ferns, green peppers, sweet corn, gladiolas, cucumbers, watermelons, tangerines, snap beans, radishes, limes, and tangelos than any other state in the union." According to Mormino, "Indian River oranges and Ruskin tomatoes, as much as the beach and postcard, helped shape Florida's image as a winter paradise and bountiful dream state." The pressures of development and urbanization, however, are taking their toll on Florida agriculture, particularly on the family farm, and the future of that agricultural supremacy is, at the beginning of the 21st century, "cloudy."

Diane Roberts's *Dream State* (Free Press, 2004, \$25) is a rollicking tale of "eight generations of swamp lawyers, conquistadors, confederate daughters, banana republicans, and other wild life," many of them her relatives, who settled on the rich soil of the plantation country of northern Florida. These early planters lived life in a literary dream, trying to recreate the life of the landed gentry: "One minute they're hacking down a gum and scrub oak jungle, eating boiled possum . . . the next they're ordering chandeliers and champagne from Philadelphia, eating green turtle soup at a restaurant with a genuine New Orleans Frenchman for a chef, and dressing up as Mary Queen of Scots or Harry Hotspur at a costume ball." This rich cast of characters runs

from Achille Murat, who ruined several dinner parties trying to create a good recipe for buzzard, to the abstemious women of Wakulla County, who would refuse to cook a bear their husbands had shot if there was a chance the bear had been drunk from raiding a moonshine still. Roberts's astuteness as a political reporter and social observer is equally impressive no matter whether she is dealing with the early Spanish settlers or the election dispute of 2000. This is history that could have been written by Carl Hiaasen.

Jim Shirley, chef at the Fish House in Pensacola, discussed Pensacola's native Gazpachi Salad at the symposium. The recipe, derived from Spanish and Italian sailors who dipped their sea biscuits into gazpacho soup to soften them, is contained in Shirley's book *Good Grits: Southern Boy Cooks* (Pediment Publishing, 2005, \$29.95). Shirley's cooking is firmly rooted in the South but influenced by his travel as a Navy pilot. Those who have eaten at the Fish House will be particularly happy to have his recipe for his signature Grits a Ya Ya, grits flavored with smoked Gouda and topped with a savory mixture of bacon, shrimp, mushrooms, and scallions.

Fred Thompson's new book, *The Big Book of Fish & Shellfish* (Chronicle Books, 2006, \$19.95) doesn't confine itself to the South, but how could any book by the author of *Iced Tea* not have a Southern slant? Fried Catfish, Barbecued Shrimp on Biscuits, Soft-Shell Crab Sandwiches, Brown Oyster Stew with Benne Seeds, Crayfish Etouffée, Seafood Country Captain—there's a wonderful mix of classics and less well known, but still traditional Southern seafood dishes. Fred and Martha Foose discussed "How Pompano Came to the Land of Cotton

and Catfish" at the Delta Divertissement.

If the best titles are those that let you know exactly what you're getting, the best titles of 2006 are certainly the movie *Snakes on a Plane* and Robert St. John's book *Deep South Parties: How to Survive the Southern Cocktail Hour without a Box of French Onion Soup Mix, a Block of Processed Cheese, or a Cocktail Weenie* (Hyperion, 2006, \$19.95). St. John's recipes are usefully divided into items to be passed, dishes for the buffet table, hot dips, cold dips, and things that can be pulled out of the freezer for unexpected guests. You'll find classics like pimento cheese, cheese straws, and shrimp dip, along with new ideas like pimento cheese biscuits with Virginia ham and a black-eyed pea hummus. There's also a choice between Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Catholic, or Episcopalian punch. Robert St. John's presentation at the symposium was "West Indies Salad: Bill Bayley Comes Home."

Robb Walsh's latest project is a book called *Sex, Death, and Oysters*, due in the fall of 2008. The book is based on an essay, nominated for a James Beard Journalism award, that may be found on the Web at [www.houstonpress.com/issues/2004-03-25/news/feature.html](http://www.houstonpress.com/issues/2004-03-25/news/feature.html). Like Robb's earlier book, *Are You Really Going to Eat That?: Reflections of a Culinary Thrill Seeker* (Counterpoint Press, 2003, \$25), *Sex, Death, and Oysters* will look at Galveston Bay's oyster beds by exploring the cultures and personalities behind them. Robb talked about Galveston Bay oysters at the symposium and also moderated a panel called "Queer Gulf Coast Foods."

THOMAS HEAD

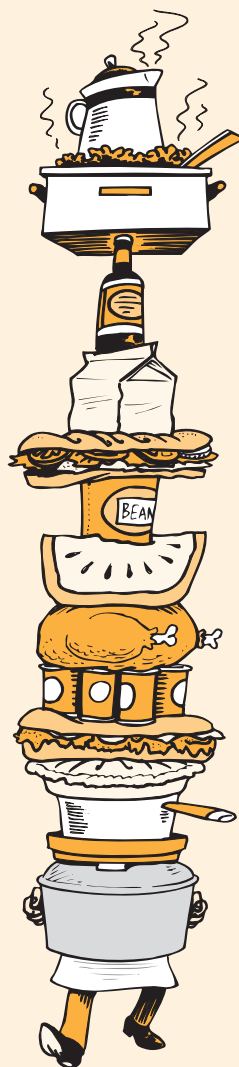


# Impressions from Camp Nashville

*SFA Day Camps are locally driven events geared toward culinary tourists. Camp Nashville—which included a wonderful side trip to Lynchburg, home of Jack Daniel’s—inspired this reverie.*

The sting of a lime popsicle from Las Paletas, and the salve of a second one, in plum. An echo of Bill Monroe’s mandolin at The Station Inn. Hap Townes’s recollections of stewed raisins. E. W. Mayo hoisting the Tabasco Guardian of the Tradition Award high above his wheelchair while sweet potatoes ooze from his fried pies. Mahalia Jackson’s music. Mennonite-made tomato cocktail, with a whispered suggestion of Bloody Marys. Quartered Cherokee Purples. Ronda and Jonda jarring The Lipstick Lounge. The symbiosis of Allan Benton’s bacon and a plank of Sean Brock’s fried catfish. Sideshow Benny slapping his jaws when he makes Tomato King. Tales of Phila Hach feeding the United Nations General Assembly beaten biscuits on the grounds of Nashville’s Parthenon. A painted pig for Jim ‘N Nick’s. Pink Ping Pong tomatoes at The Turnip Truck. Dill pickle counterpoint to hot chicken melody and cayenne-stained light bread as coda. Guardian Award winner André Prince Jeffries telling filmmaker Joe York about a customer who eats Prince’s hot chicken in a bathtub of cold water. Guardian Award winner David Swett Jr. describing his “restaurant without recipes.” Habanero-spiced sausage and Yazoo brew among bricks at Marathon Motor Works. White beans green beans roast beef meatloaf macaroni fried green tomatoes banana pudding chocolate pie: Arnold’s. Praise for Mary Beth. Camp Nashville 2006.

FRED SAUCEMAN



## SFA Contributors

**MARCIE COHEN FERRIS**, new SFA president, is assistant professor of American Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is author of *Matzoh Ball Gumbo: Culinary Tales of the Jewish South*.

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

**HENRY MENCKEN**, a native of the South, now lives and writes beyond.

**ANGIE MOSIER**, along with her husband, Johnny Mosier, is proprietor of Blue-Eyed Daisy Bakeshop south of Atlanta, in Serene, Georgia.

**FRED SAUCEMAN** is executive assistant to the president for university relations at East Tennessee State University. He writes a weekly column on food for the *Kingsport Times-News*. His essays about mountain food culture are heard monthly on *Inside Appalachia*, produced by West Virginia Public Broadcasting.

## SOUTHERN FOODWAYS ALLIANCE



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# Southern Culure Catalog

## **Faulkner's Mississippi: Land into Legend**

Transforms the fiction of William Faulkner's mythical Jefferson and Yoknapatawpha into the reality of Oxford and Lafayette County, Mississippi, with quotations from Faulkner's writings correlated with appropriate scenes. The first motion pictures inside Faulkner's home are presented along with rare still photographs of the writer. Narrated by Joseph Cotton. Script by Evans Harrington. Producer, Robert D. Oesterling, University of Mississippi Center for Public Service and Continuing Studies. 1965.

Color, 32 minutes.

DVD1069 . . . . . \$25.00

Friends . . . . . \$22.50

## **William Faulkner Stamp Ceremony**

A 22-cent Literary Arts Commemorative stamp honoring William Faulkner was issued by the United States Postal Service during a ceremony at the University of Mississippi on August 3, 1987. The DVD of this program includes remarks by author Eudora Welty, Faulkner's daughter, Jill Faulkner Summers, and others.

Color, 34 minutes.

DVD1231 . . . . . \$25.00

Friends . . . . . \$22.50

## **William Faulkner and Eudora Welty**

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

Color, 34 minutes.

DVD1104 . . . . . \$25.00

Friends . . . . . \$22.50

**ORDER FORM ON PAGE 39**

# Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Oxford, Mississippi • June 10, 2006

The Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters (MIAL) presented its prestigious 2006 awards to five Mississippians at a gala banquet in Oxford on June 10. Each award winner received a \$1,000 prize for exceptional artistic achievement in 2005. The MIAL Awards are the only statewide literary and art prizes chosen in juried competition by outstanding out-of-state judges, all prominent in their fields.

Tom Bailey won the Fiction Award for his novel *The Grace That Keeps This World*. Bailey teaches writing at Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania. The other nominees in fiction were Bill Fitzhugh, Greg Iles, Darden North, and John Pritchard.

Suzanne Marrs is the Nonfiction Award winner for her book *Eudora Welty: A Biography*. Marrs teaches at Millsaps College in Jackson. The other nonfiction nominees were Leif Anderson, Patti Carr Black, John R. Ford, Ellen Gilchrist, Trent Lott, April Newlin, Jimmy Reed, and Clifton Taubert.

Andrew Owens won the Music Composition Award for "Three Etudes," for solo piano. Owens lives in Cleveland, Mississippi, and is a freshman at Delta State University. Ken Davies, Keith Pettway, Steve Rouse, and Richard Waters were also nominated for music composition.

Thomas Nawrocki has won the Visual Arts Award for a traveling exhibition of his prints and fiber space work. He is a professor of art at Mississippi University for Women. Also nominated in visual arts were Norma Bourdeaux, Bill Lester, Mildred Wolfe, P. Sanders McNeal, Robin Whitfield, Rod Moorhead, Vidal Blankenship, and William A. Smith Jr.

Robyn Moore is the winner of the Photography Award for *Atmosphere Lit*

*Apart*, a series of silver-gelatin prints made with pinhole camera/lenses. Moore is an assistant professor of Photography and Video at Delta State University. Stephen Kirkpatrick and Jane Kerr were also nominated for photography.

Tom Meredith, Mississippi Commissioner of Higher Education, was the master of ceremonies for the awards banquet, which concluded a full day of activities for the winners, nominees, and MIAL members. Among the highlights were a double-decker bus tour of Oxford conducted by Beckett Howorth; a tour of Rowan Oak, the home of William Faulkner; and a special exhibition of the award-winning quilts of Gwendolyn McGee at the University Museum. Off Square Books hosted readings and book signings, and Southside Gallery exhibited artwork by the winners and nominees. Ann Abadie and Patty Lewis coordinated the day's events.

MIAL is accepting nominations for 2007 artist awards from now until January 15, 2007. Artists—current or former residents of Mississippi—are nominated on the basis of work shown, published, or performed in 2006. Only members of MIAL may nominate. Anyone may join; membership dues start at \$35 for an individual (students at \$15). Visit MIAL's Web site at [www.ms-arts-letters.org](http://www.ms-arts-letters.org) for complete instructions about joining and about nominating an artist for an award.

Next year's awards gala will be held in Greenwood, Mississippi, on June 9, 2007. For additional information, call Margaret Anne Mitchell, Executive Secretary, at 601-366-0761 or write MIAL, P.O. Box 2346, Jackson, MS 39225-2346. The MIAL Web site address is [www.ms-arts-letters.org](http://www.ms-arts-letters.org).

JOANNE PRICHARD MORRIS



# Mississippi Gulf Coast Turned Out for 2006 Arts and Letters Awards

It would be difficult to dispute the assertion that on a per capita basis Mississippi has produced more writers of enduring note than any other state. Against the stereotype of a poorly educated and functionally illiterate populace, Mississippi has spawned numerous authors of international merit.

The Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters was formed in 1978 to recognize contributions to the arts by Mississippians. Awards are presented each year in seven categories: Fiction, Nonfiction, Visual Art, Musical Composition (Concert and Popular), Photography, and Poetry. The competition is juried by judges from out of state.

Previous winners in the Fiction category include Walker Percy, Ellen Douglas, Ellen Gilchrist, Larry Brown, and Richard Ford. Nonfiction authors acknowledged have ranged from Stephen Ambrose to Willie Morris.

Margaret McMullan, 2005 Fiction winner for *How I Found the Strong* and part-year resident of Pass Christian, commented recently, "It is every writer's dream to win an award from her home state and it meant a lot to my editor at Houghton Mifflin. Very shortly after the ceremony, they contracted me to write a sequel." Margaret's next book, *Crossing No Bob*, is due out in the autumn of 2007.

This year's recipient of the Nonfiction award, Suzanne MARR, was first brought to this event as a guest in 1988 by Eudora Welty. MARR, a professor of English at Millsaps College, was recognized for *Eudora Welty: A Biography*.

MARR recounted her earlier attendance in comments at this year's event, "During the cocktail hour I stood with Eudora when Walker Percy joined us. Rendered mute by the occasion, I went to our table and waited for the others to join me. At first only a very pleasant lady did so, but I thought she had chosen the wrong table and



Recipients of 2006 MILA awards pictured here are (from left) Suzanne MARR (Nonfiction), Andrew Owens (Musical Composition), Tom Bailey (Fiction), Thomas Nawrocki (Visual Arts), and Robyn Moore (Photography).

Fiction, now living in Pennsylvania, reiterated that his roots remain in his Indianola upbringing. He "braves the mosquitoes" and returns annually. In a studied and precise manner, Bailey attributed his success to the Magnolia State, "The Mississippi of my imagination is where I became a writer."

The Gulf Coast was well represented at this year's ceremony. Attendees from Ocean Springs, Gautier, Diamondhead, and Pass

Christian made the long drive to Oxford. The annual event moves to a different Mississippi town each year. All agreed with the remark, "How pleasant it is to be in Oxford, a town that is intact and as it should be." There was not a chugging debris removal truck or a blue tarp diaped over a roof anywhere within a hundred miles.

Oxford was the perfect backdrop, the luminous light in June in this hamlet, where the artistic wellspring has gushed most persistently for an extended period of time, a tributary of the stream of talent that forms the mighty Mississippi.

Tom Bailey, author of *The Grace that Keeps This World* and the 2006 winner for

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SCOTT NAUGLE

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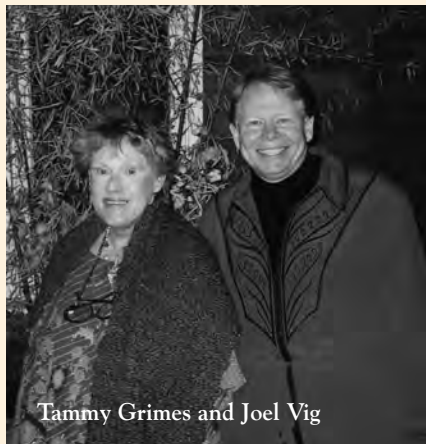
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# Broadway Stars Perform at the 14th Annual Mississippi Delta Tennessee Williams Festival

Tammy Grimes (Tony Award-winning actress for *The Unsinkable Molly Brown* in 1961 and for *Private Lives* in 1970) and Joel Vig (*Hairspray* star for its first three years on Broadway) played the leads in Tennessee Williams's short play *The Strangest Kind of Romance* at this year's Mississippi Delta Tennessee Williams Festival. They were joined by five Clarksdale actors who rehearsed with them the week before the performance. Both Grimes and Vig have been life-long Tennessee Williams fans so were delighted to have the opportunity to perform in his hometown and tour his grandfather's (the Reverend Dakin Williams's) St. George's Episcopal Church, have a drink and a dance at "Moon Lake Casino" (Uncle Henry's Place), and attend lectures and performances at the historic Cutrer Mansion, which was well known to Williams and his family.

The "beyond Broadway" part of the festival included presentations by four major Williams scholars. Focusing on *The Rose Tattoo* and *Sweet Bird of Youth*, Kenneth Holditch spoke on "Tennessee's Other Mississippi: The Gulf Coast Plays." Michael Paller made observations on Williams's own "gentlemen callers," which he has written about extensively in his new book by that title. In "Bird on the Wing: From Mississippi to Broadway with *Sweet Bird of Youth*," biographer Milly Barranger focused on the original viewpoint of *Sweet Bird of Youth* producer Cheryl Crawford, who produced a total of four of Williams's plays. With an overview and a preview of her edition of *Notebooks* by Tennessee Williams, editor Margaret Bradham Thornton brought to light a fascinating array of information about Williams that has not been known until now. Most curious of all was a photograph of Williams's death mask. In order to get the best photographer possible to make a picture of it for the *Notebooks*, Thornton told of traveling about the Big Apple with Williams's death mask in hand fearful of not being able to get it back to its owner in one piece.



Tammy Grimes and Joel Vig

Colby Kullman

"*Suddenly Last Summer*; or What You Will: Tennessee Williams and William Shakespeare." He was followed by Travis Montgomery, who presented the third in a trilogy of *Streetcar* papers he has composed titled "Tennessee Williams's *Streetcar*: Lessons from a Failed Migration."

Every Saturday morning of the festival, nearly 100 high school students from all over the state of Mississippi compete in acting competition for \$3,000 in prize money. Besides the "Stella!" shouting contest (always immensely popular), there are awards for the best monologue and the best scene from a play by Tennessee Williams. Although *The Glass Menagerie* is always a favorite selection, this year's students worked with *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Sweet Bird of Youth*, and many other Williams classics. Jay Jensen, "Coach of the Stars," concluded the competition with a student acting workshop.

Saturday afternoon features a unique creation of the Mississippi Delta program with a series of "porch plays." Performing from the porches of various houses in the historic district of Clarksdale, actors and actresses portray characters from Williams's plays in selections that are no longer than 20 minutes. Every half hour, the entire audience (always sitting in the yard facing the porch) moves to another yard to see one more porch play production. This year's stars were Janna Montgomery, Alice Walker (directed by Rebecca Bourgeois), and Wanda Reid (Mississippi Humanities Teacher Award Winner for 2006).

As is now the custom, the weekend ends with evening prayer at St. George's Episcopal Church, a barbecue supper at Clarksdale Station, performances from the drama competition winners, and dancing to the Wesley Jefferson Soul Blues Band.

COLBY H. KULLMAN

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## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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**MARK CAMARIGG** is the former assistant editor and current publications manager for *Living Blues* magazine. He is also a doctoral student in the Department of History at the University of Mississippi researching Soul Blues music in the American South.

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

**FREDRIC KOEPEL** taught English and creative writing before becoming a journalist. He lives in Memphis and writes wine, food, book, and art reviews for the *Commercial Appeal*.

**MARY LYNN KOTZ**, author of *Rauschenberg: Art and Life* and three other books, is a contributing editor to *ARTnews* magazine. She received a degree in journalism from the University of Mississippi.

**COLBY H. KULLMAN** is professor of English at the University of Mississippi. Among his publications are articles on Tennessee Williams and other modern dramatists, *Theatre Companies of the World*, and *Speaking on Stage: Interviews with Contemporary American Playwrights*. He is coeditor of *Studies in American Drama: 1945–Present*.

**SALLY CASSADY LYON** is a Gulfport native and Sewanee graduate. She lives in Oxford, Mississippi, with her husband, Dalton, and her 19-pound cat, Patty MacTavish. She works at the Center, as the Director Charles Reagan Wilson's assistant.

**KATE MEDLEY** is a University of Montana graduate, originally from Jackson, Mississippi. She currently works as a freelance photojournalist while she finishing her master's degree in Southern Studies.

**GEORGEANNA MILAM** is a University of North Carolina graduate, originally from Tupelo, Mississippi. She plans to complete her master's degree in Southern Studies with a thesis on Craig Claiborne.

**MARY MARGARET MILLER** is a second-year Southern Studies graduate student from the Mississippi Delta. She has an undergraduate degree in journalism from the University of Mississippi and works as a freelance journalist.

**JOANNE PRICHARD MORRIS**, a board member of the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters, is the coauthor of *Yazoo: Its Legends and Legacies* and was executive editor at the University of Mississippi Press from 1983 to 1997.

**BILL MINOR** has covered Mississippi politics since 1947. He is the author of the 2001 book *Eyes on Mississippi: A Fifty-Year Chronicle of Change*, based on more than 60 of his columns. In 1966 the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University gave him the Louis Lyons Award for "conscience and integrity in journalism." In 1997 the Annenberg School for Communications of Pennsylvania selected him as the first recipient of the John Chancellor Award for Excellence in Journalism.

**SCOTT NAUGLE** is a regular contributor to the *Sun Herald* and other publications. He opened Pass Christian Books in 2003. Hurricane

Katrina swept away the building that housed the bookstore, but not the business. Pass Christian Books has continued to serve customers via the store Web site, rented facilities for signings and book clubs, and delivered books to customers. The new store opened in Pass Christian/DeLisle, Mississippi, on November 1.

**TED OWNBY** holds a joint appointment in Southern Studies and History. He is the author of *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1965–1920* and *American Dreams in Mississippi: Consumers, Poverty, and Culture, 1830–1998*.

**DAVID WHARTON** is assistant professor and director of documentary projects at the Center, where he teaches courses in Southern Studies, fieldwork, and photography. He is the author of *The Soul of a Small Texas Town: Photographs, Memories, and History from McDade*.

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

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



# Gift Ideas

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

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



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

Color, 15 minutes.

DVD1145 . . . . . \$15.00

Friends . . . . . \$13.50

## James "Son" Thomas

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



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

Color, 17 minutes.

DVD1146 . . . . . \$15.00

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## Voices of Perthshire

*Voices from Perthshire* depicts life on a Mississippi Delta cotton plantation from 1938 to 1942,



as seen through the home movie camera of Emma Knowlton Lytle. Mrs. Lytle donated the original silent 8mm film to the Southern Media Archive. Producers Karen Glynn and Peter Slade added recorded commentary from both he filmmaker and retired Perthshire farm workers to the film. *Voices of Perthshire* depicts the full cycle of a cotton crop from breaking the ground, to making a bale, to weaving cloth in the textile mills of North Carolina. (*Voices of Perthshire* replaces the earlier *Raisin' Cotton* production.)

Color, 63 minutes.

DVD 3001 . . . . . \$25.00

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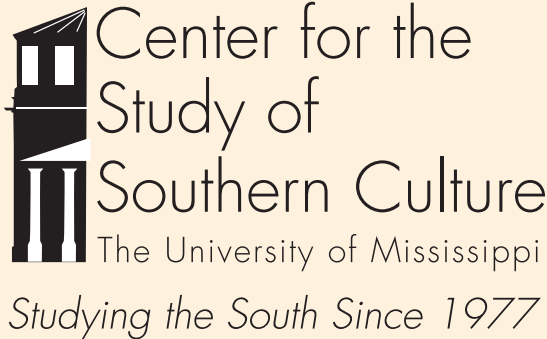
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