

the Southern Register



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOUTHERN CULTURE • WINTER 2007

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

2007 Oxford Conference for the Book

This year's Oxford Conference for the Book will be a special one. The conference honors each year a prominent Southern writer, and Larry Brown will be the focus of attention when the 14th annual conference meets on March 22–24, 2007.

Brown was one of the South's, and nation's, most acclaimed younger writers, when he died November 24, 2004. The conference will provide the first literary occasion to gather critics, scholars, musicians, teachers, friends, and family to consider and celebrate Brown's achievements.

Brown was an especially well known figure around Oxford. Having grown up in Lafayette County, he studied writing at the University of Mississippi, taught here briefly, and had been a frequent participant in Center work.

Brown was a legendary figure—the Oxford firefighter who served the community from 1973 to 1990, when he retired to work full time on his writing. He studied with Mississippi writer Ellen Douglas, and his wide reading and relentless work on his writing contributed to his prolific success. He published his first book, *Facing the Music: Short Stories*, in 1988. He wrote five novels, a second short-story collection, and two books of nonfiction. His last novel, *A Miracle of Catfish*, will be published by Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill on March 20, just before the conference begins.

Brown received the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Award for Literature, the Southern Critics Circle Award for Fiction, the Thomas Wolfe Award, and the Lila Wallace–Reader's Digest Award. He was a member of the Fellowship of Southern Writers and was honored with the Mississippi Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts in 2000.

Brown was a leading figure in the literature of working-class Southerners. *Time* magazine assessed his writing as “clean, simple, and powerful,” and the *New Yorker* said “he is blunt and abrasive about subjects that tend to cause flinching.”



Larry Brown, Oxford, 1995. © Tom Rankin.

The Fourteenth
Oxford Conference for the Book
The University of Mississippi • Oxford, Mississippi
March 22 - 24, 2007

Illustrating 2007 Oxford Conference for the Book materials is a Larry Brown portrait made by Tom Rankin in 1996. The portrait is reproduced on posters and T-shirts and is available from the Center by calling 800-390-3527.

The conference will include the sessions “Larry Brown: Friends and Writers,” “Larry Brown on Music,” “Remembering Larry Brown,” “Writing about Larry Brown,” “Teaching Larry Brown,” “Editing Larry Brown,” “Larry Brown on Stage and Screen,” and “Writers Remember Larry Brown.”

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REGISTER STAFF

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

The end of the year had me pondering transitions, reflecting on previous years, and looking forward to what is coming at the Center. Certainly, the year 2006 was a memorable one.

The Blues Today Symposium had its fourth annual meeting in February, marked by the return of the founding Center director, Bill Ferris, to talk about his work documenting Mississippi blues in the 1960s and 1970s. The special issue of *Living Blues* magazine on Katrina, which also came out in February, was a memorable one, including interviews with many performers affected by the storm. I'm struck many times by the continuity of Center work on the South, as in *Living Blues* completing its 35th year of publication in 2006.

One should also note the Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference in that regard. Attendees gathered for the 33rd meeting in July. The theme was a timely one, "Global Faulkner," and scholars made connections among Faulkner's South and writings in Spain, Italy, the Caribbean, Latin America, Japan, and Africa. A highlight of the conference was the appearance of Guinea's Tierno Monenembo, a leading African novelist.

The Oxford Conference for the Book has its 13th gathering, as we honored Shelby Foote and explored the many dimensions of his work. Ken Burns, producer-director of the Civil War series on Public Broadcasting that made Foote a celebrity, taped a special message for the conference in appreciation of Foote's work. The Delta Literary Tour before the conference was an especially notable event, culminating in a session in the Sumner, Mississippi, courthouse where the trial of Emmett Till's accused killers took place in the 1960s. The old burdens of Southern history resonated in that spot, on that day.

Our conference schedule frames the year for those of us at the Center, and we closed out 2006 with our third Future of the South meeting. For the first time, we met away from Oxford in collaboration with the Clinton School of Public Service and the Clinton Presidential Library in Little Rock. The focus on community and leadership was a productive one, with panels lively and audience participation notable. We welcomed also the appearance of Jim Clinton, the director of the Southern Growth Policies Board, which pioneered the kind of work we are also doing now in thinking about what is to come in regional life.

I can truly say that publication of the first four volumes of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* in 2006 brought great satisfaction to all of us who worked on them for years. The September book signing at Square Books in Oxford was a time to mark the publication occasion and look forward to the next volumes, on Language and Ethnicity, which will appear later this year. I should also note that we reorganized our work on the *Mississippi Encyclopedia* and made much progress on it, thanks to the patient oversight of my colleague and coeditor of the book, Ted Ownby.

Now, writing in early 2007, we had a successful blues symposium in February, this year focusing on blueswomen. We are eagerly anticipating the Oxford Conference for the Book, with its opportunity to consider the achievements of much-admired Larry Brown, who died too young but still with a considerable body of work for us to appreciate.

In November of this year the Center will celebrate the 30th anniversary of our founding. In 1977 we officially began our work with a Eudora Welty Symposium. This year we will commemorate our three decades of work with another meeting, to consider the Center's work, and that of others studying the region, in documenting Southern life at a time of great transitions. We will look also at the role of culture in the future of the South and ways our best cultural traditions can continue to provide meaning as the region's people adapt to ever more changes.

CHARLES REAGAN WILSON

Wilson's New Book Explores Religion in the South

Center director Charles Reagan Wilson's latest publication, *Southern Missions: The Religion of the American South*, was published at the end of 2006 by Baylor University Press. The book consists of the Charles Edmonson Historical Lectures that Baylor University invited Wilson to deliver in March of 2006.

The Edmonson Lecture Series began 29 years ago and has brought to the Baylor campus historians speaking on such diverse topics as "The Taiping Vision of Christian China," "Spanish Borderlands and Wild Indians," and "The Making of the Constitution." Previous historians in the series who have dealt with the South include C. Vann Woodward, Dan T. Carter, Stephen B. Oates, Nell Irvin Painter, and Leon Litwack.

Wilson delivered his lectures over two days and was given a tour of the Waco, Texas, area by longtime Southern religious historian Rufus B. Spain. Among their stops was the Branch Davidian compound where dozens of cult members of that religion died in the early 1990s.

The lectures and book argue that the American South has had long global connections for its religion, from the early and enduring influence of African religions to Evangelical Protestantism's ties to Britain, to the cultural significance of Southern missionaries, to, more recently, the arrival of significant numbers of such world religions as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Latino Catholicism. Globalization has religious implications, with the adaptation of new immigrants to Southern cultural ways and the adjustment of Southerners themselves to new ways a part of the regional context for globalization.

Wilson will discuss his new book July 11, 2007, in Jackson at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History "History Is Lunch" series. For information call 601-576-6857 or e-mail pubinfo@mdah.state.ms.us.



Rufus B. Spain

Charles Reagan Wilson at the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas

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

Gammill  Gallery

Exhibition Schedule

January 15, 2007–March 16, 2007
Rick Lang
Signs of the South

March 19–May 14, 2007
Tom Rankin
Portraits of Larry Brown

May 17–August 15, 2007
Lisa Bourdeaux Percy
Terra: A Delta Tango in Time

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.

New English Chair Proposes More Diversity in Literature, Changes in Writing Program

The arrival of 2007 has brought a new perspective to Patrick Quinn, chair of the University of Mississippi's Department of English. Quinn, who joined the University's faculty in August, said the usual adjustments—moving in, learning the environment—were compounded by a series of intra-departmental challenges. "It's been a tough five months, but I've learned a lot," he said. "Everyone here has been very kind and generous. I'm beginning to get a sense of how it all fits together."

During a trip to Italy over the holiday break, the administrator had the chance to regroup and reflect upon his first semester experiences. The result of that introspection is a new vision for the department in particular and for the University in general. "I think that there's a lot of room for improvement in written communication here," Quinn said. "There's a kind of looseness in the program that is unhealthy. My number one priority right now is to work hard at improving our writing skills by getting our writing program back on track."

Quinn said that he has already formed a writing committee within the English department to examine existing conditions and to make recommendations to Glenn Hopkins, dean of the College of Liberal Arts. "I've set a goal for myself to have a proposal ready early this semester," he added. "Pending approval and support from other departments, I'd like to see major changes in the sequencing of our writing courses within the next two years."

Quinn said he intends to ensure that there continues to be a strong relationship between the Center for the Study of Southern Culture and the Department of English. "I am encouraged by the cutting edge research that is going on in the area of 'The Global South' here in the department and in the Center. Clearly, it was these kinds of initiatives that made me think that Ole Miss and I had similar values," Quinn said. "Then, when one factors in the



Patrick Quinn

Faulkner and Book Conferences, which encompass not only the University and local community, but resonate on a national and international level, then one has to be excited by the opportunity to be part of such a vital community."

Another priority for Quinn is a celebration of the diversification in literature. He said he knows the graduate and undergraduate offerings are especially strong in the field of Southern literature and cultural history, which make the English department distinct from others in the country. "Certainly, Ole Miss has a great history in Southern literature," said Quinn. "However, I feel that expertise can be made richer when it is supplemented with offerings from African American, British, Caribbean, and other world literatures."

A prolific author himself, Quinn recently coedited with Dean Baldwin of Pennsylvania State University *An Anthology of Colonial and Post-Colonial Fiction* (Houghton Mifflin, 2007). Four years in the making, the book required that Quinn go beyond his familiarity with British literature to look into the literary culture in the rest of the English-speaking world.

"I am now working in American

Decadent literature," Quinn said. "Essentially, this means I am reading dusty old magazines and novels made popular during the early 1900s, but that have been virtually unread for the past century. I find it all quite fascinating."

Quinn came to the University from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, where he was chair and professor of English literature of the Humanities and Arts Department for five years. Prior to that position, he served at the University of Northampton, St. John's College-Oxford, the University of Oxford, the University of Toronto, the University of Maryland in Germany, Johannes Gutenberg University in Germany, the University of Mosul in Iraq, the Campion School in Greece, and Matthew Humberstone School in England. He earned his PhD in English literature from the University of Warwick, master's from the University of Ottawa, and bachelor's from the University of Guelph. Quinn and his wife, Angela, are the parents of seven adult children.

To learn more about the Department of English, visit www.olemiss.edu/depts/english/.

EDWIN SMITH

“Faulkner’s Sexualities”

Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference • July 22–26, 2007

William Faulkner grew up and began his writing career during a time of great cultural upheaval, not the least aspect of which was in the realm of sexuality. Every normative notion of sexual identity and sexual relationship was ripe for reexamination, every form of behavior and utterance probed for its sexual implication. Not only does Faulkner explore multiple forms of sexuality throughout his work, he also studies their implications within various social, economic, and racial concerns. Quentin Compson’s obsession over decaying social standards in *The Sound and the Fury* is complicated by the incestuous desires seemingly designed to purify what he regards as sexual violation. Same-sex attraction in *Absalom, Absalom!* is both the screen for racial hatred and its hidden core. Sexuality and trade in *The Hamlet* antagonize and inspire each other. Above all, the sexual and psychosexual dimensions of race relations is always a factor, a straight and/or queer dynamic inseparable from an intimacy that underlies even the most violent situations.

The cartoon selected to illustrate conference materials was drawn by Faulkner and appeared in a 1924 Ole Miss publication called *The Scream*. Prior to the beginning of his career as a novelist, Faulkner as visual artist was already bringing together some of the issues of sexuality he would probe so deeply in his fiction: the male “gaze” as a form of sexual objectification, the “blackness” of sexual mystery, the interaction of heterosexual and same-sex dynamics.

The 34th annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference—“Faulkner’s Sexualities”—will explore for five days of lectures, panel discussions, tours, and social gatherings some of the complex possibilities of his treatment of sexuality. Among the scholars who will be appearing at the conference are John Duvall of Purdue University,



Illustrating the 2007 Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference poster and program is a cartoon William Faulkner drew for a 1924 Ole Miss publication called *The Scream*.

Jaime Harker of the University of Mississippi, Catherine Gunther Kodat of Hamilton College, Deborah McDowell of the University of Virginia, Gary N. Richards of the University of New Orleans, Dawn Trouard of the University of Central Florida, and Michael Zeitlin of the University of British Columbia.

John Duvall is the author of *Faulkner’s Marginal Couple: Invisible, Outlaw, and Unspeakable Communities* and *The Identifying Fictions of Toni Morrison: Modernist Authenticity and Postmodern Blackness*, as well as the editor of *Modern Fiction Studies*. Jaime Harker is the author of the forthcoming book *America the Middlebrow: Women’s Novels, Progressivism, and Middlebrow Authorship between the Wars* and coeditor of a forthcoming collection, *The Oprah Affect: Critical Essays on Oprah’s Book Club*. Catherine Kodat has published essays on Faulkner, Allen Tate, Jean Toomer, as well as film, music, and dance, and is currently working on a book-length study of the culture of the Cold War. Deborah

McDowell has edited four books, is one of the editors of the new *Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, and is the author of “*The Changing Same*”: *Studies in Fiction by Black Women*. Gary Richards is the author of *Lovers and Beloveds: Sexual Otherness in Southern Fiction, 1936–1961*. Dawn Trouard is the coauthor of *Reading Faulkner’s “Sanctuary”* and the editor of *Eudora Welty: Eye of the Storyteller*, as well as the executive editor of the *Faulkner Journal*. Michael Zeitlin has published numerous essays on Faulkner, Joyce, Donald Barthelme, and psychoanalysis, and has edited or coedited eight numbers of the *Faulkner Journal*.

Some of the themes and tentative titles of the conference papers, illustrating how diverse and wide-ranging the sexualities of Faulkner’s fiction can be, are Duvall’s “Faulkner and Black Sexuality”; Harker’s “‘A Summer of Wysteria’: Female Homoerotics and the Reconstruction of the Southern Family”; Kodat’s look at the question of how Faulkner reads queer theory; Richards’

study of same-sex desire in Faulkner's early fiction, including *Mosquitoes*, in the context of New Orleans culture; Trouard's "The Best Time They Never Had: Faulkner's Bored Women"; and Zeitlin's essay on the relations between Faulkner's treatment of sexuality and the Cold War.

Other program events will include a panel of Faulkner friends and family, moderated by Elizabeth Shiver; sessions on "Teaching Faulkner," conducted by James Carothers, University of Kansas, Charles Peek, University of Nebraska at Kearney, Terrell Tebbetts, Lyon College, and Theresa Towner, University of Texas at Dallas; a discussion of "Collecting Faulkner" by Seth Berner; and an exhibition of Faulkner books, manuscripts, photographs, and memorabilia at the John Davis Williams Library. There will also be guided daylong tours of Oxford, Lafayette County, Holly Springs, the Mississippi Delta, and Memphis; a picnic served at Faulkner's home, Rowan Oak; and "Faulkner on the Fringe," an "open mike" evening at the Southside Gallery. Throughout the conference week, the University Press of Mississippi will sponsor an exhibit of books published by the American Association of University Presses.

The conference will begin on Sunday, July 22, with a reception at the University Museum, and a special exhibition entitled *Faulkner Family Artistic Endeavors*, including paintings by Maud Falkner and John Faulkner. After the Museum reception, the

opening papers of the conference will take place at the Johnson Commons Auditorium and will be followed by a buffet supper. A Sunday evening program will feature a dramatic reading, entitled *Mr. Twain, Meet Mr. Faulkner*, written and directed by Roseanna Whitlow, of Southeast East Missouri State University.

In addition to the regular conference registration fees, we are offering a limited number of waivers of registration for 20 graduate students and junior faculty, to be awarded on a first-come basis. Applications should be sent to Jamie Dakin, Department of English, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677-1848, with a letter from the applicant's department or graduate chair confirming your status.

For more information on the conference contact the Office of Outreach and Continuing Education, Post Office Box 879, The University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677-0879; telephone 662-915-7283; e-mail: fyconf@olemiss.edu. For information on the conference program, course, credit, and all other inquiries, contact the Department of English, Box 1848, Bondurant Hall, The University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677-1848; telephone 662-915-7439; e-mail: fyconf@olemiss.edu. For on-line registration, visit us on the Web at <http://www.outreach.olemiss.edu/event/s/faulkner>.

DONALD KARTIGANER

In Memoriam

Lucille Starnes Daniels (January 15, 1915–February 9, 2007) was born in Lafayette County, Mississippi, where she resided until her death at age 92. She and her late husband, Motee Daniels, were devoted supporters of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture from the time of its founding in 1977. The Lucille and Motee Daniels Endowment Fund, established in 1998 in honor of their friendship with the Center's founding director, Bill Ferris, provides an annual award for an outstanding Southern Studies graduate student paper. Contributions to the fund may be sent to the Center.

Suzanne Reiné Antoinette Falkner, a former ballerina with the Paris Ballet, died November 14, 2006, at age 96 in Mobile, Alabama. She was the widow of Murry C. "Jack" Falkner, a brother of William Faulkner. Mrs. Falkner came to the United States in 1945 and lived in Oxford for a short time before moving to Mobile in 1956.

William Styron, Virginia-born novelist who was one of the leading literary figures of the post-World War II generation, died at age 81 on November 1, 2006, at his home on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. He came to Oxford to visit his longtime friend Willie Morris and as featured speaker for the 1989 Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference, the 1993 Oxford Conference for the Book, and other events.

George Brown Tindall, one of the most distinguished 20th-century historians of the American South and Kenan professor emeritus at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, died at age 85 on December 2, 2006. He was a consulting editor to the Center's *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*.

The 13th annual Southern Writers, Southern Writing Graduate Student Conference

will be held at the University of Mississippi July 19–21, 2007. Creative and critical readings will address various topics on or about the South. Critical topics are not restricted to literature; we welcome submissions from other disciplines and are particularly interested in interdisciplinary perspectives. Students whose papers are accepted may register for the 34th annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference at a reduced rate of \$100. For more information, visit www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner or write to southernwriters@gmail.com.

Mississippi Audubon Oral History Project at Strawberry Plains

Philip K. Ensley and David Wharton, alongside graduate students at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, recently completed work on the Mississippi Audubon Oral History Project. Consisting of more than 35 interviews conducted between 2003 and 2005, the project documents tenant/sharecrop life on the (former) Strawberry Plains plantation, now an Audubon Society wildlife refuge outside of Holly Springs, Mississippi. Details contained within the extensive interviews cover components of tenant/sharecrop life ranging from agricultural process and wildlife, to social events, music, medicine and remedies, hunting techniques, foodways, and religious life—to name but a few.

Willed to the National Audubon Society by sisters Margaret Finley Shackelford and Ruth Finley, Strawberry Plains' roots date back to 1836, when Ebenezer Davis first purchased land that was ceded by the Chickasaw Indians. The property, over 2,500 acres of wildlife habitat, centers on the Davis House, a structure initially constructed in 1851, consequently burned during the Civil War, and then fully restored by Mrs. Shackelford in the 1960s. During much of the 20th century the land was run by the Davis and Finley families as a tenant/sharecrop farm, prior to their ultimately bequeathing it to Audubon Mississippi in 1983. The goal of the Mississippi Audubon Oral History Project was to archive a detailed history of this period. Accordingly, the interviews were conducted across the spectrum of those who lived, worked, and visited Strawberry Plains.

Two areas which are of particular relevance to the study deal with the day-to-day details of sharecrop/tenant farm life and (with respect to Audubon) the abundant wildlife present on the land. Regarding the former, interviews cover a broad range of topics: whether curing ham, tap stick hunting, or tongue-in-groove woodwork; from home-based juke joints to church-run baseball, the



Philip K. Ensley

Graduate assistant Rob Hawkins interviews Mrs. Lillian Burton (right) and Mrs. Ruth Shelton (center) inside the sharecropper's home where Mrs. Shelton was born in 1931 and where at one time Mrs. Burton's grandparents resided. Mrs. Shelton gave birth to two children in this home and this was her first visit here in 50 years. It was Mrs. Burton's first visit to the site. Her great-grandfather was a slave at the former Strawberry Plains Plantation and had lost a hand in a cotton gin accident.

study offers researchers and historians the opportunity to engage a truly comprehensive study of this complex social past. The project also documents the diverse range of fauna and flora present on the Strawberry Plains preserve, which is home to over 200 species of birds alone. Interviews cover a list of species historically present in North Mississippi, and in some cases even discuss those whose numbers have surged or receded over the course of the last few decades.

Spearheading the effort as project director was Philip K. Ensley, a Strawberry Plains volunteer and veterinarian who retired from the Sand Diego Zoo in 2005. Photographer and Documentary Studies professor David Wharton of the Center for the Study of

Southern Culture was named Mississippi Humanities Council Scholar on the project and served to guide graduate recipients of the Dr. Ted Laferber Audubon Oral History Internship through every stage of the process, primary interviews to final indices. Willie Mallory of the Strawberry Church served as liaison between oral historians and former tenants of the Strawberry Plains community. Also involved was the Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage at the University of Southern Mississippi, which transcribed the recorded interviews. The oral history project was funded through a grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council, with matching funds from the Strawberry Plains Audubon Center.

ODIE LINDSEY

Southern Studies Graduate Receives NAACP “Oasis of Freedom and Justice” Award

Chuck Yarbrough has been interested in African American heritage since he moved to Columbus, Mississippi, in 1995. Fresh out of graduate school, armed with a master’s degree in Southern Studies from the University of Mississippi, he got a job teaching history at the Mississippi School for Math and Science that fall.

One of Yarbrough’s first projects with his students was related to the African American experience in the community. The work they did led to an annual local African American history tour, a new brochure on local African American history, and the first-ever Eighth of May program in Columbus’s historic Sandfield Cemetery.

Now, his years of effort have paid off, as he recently received the Lowndes County NAACP’s “Oasis of Freedom and Justice” Award for his work in the area. “I’m honored that local leaders have selected my contributions to our community as worthy of this recognition,” Yarbrough said.

“Chuck is the foremost authority on the complete history of Columbus. The complete history also includes African American history, and he makes sure our stories get told as well,” the Reverend Tony Montgomery told the *Columbus Dispatch* newspaper. Montgomery, a Missionary Union Baptist Church minister, is one of the three founding members of the Joshua Project, a Columbus group dedicated to providing educational, social, and financial projects in the area community.

The Joshua Project, along with the NAACP, honored Yarbrough and three other Columbus residents during a tribute to Martin Luther King Jr. on January 13, where their work was recognized as fulfilling the slain civil rights leader’s dream of unifying Mississippians regardless of color.

In addition to his duties as teacher at MSMS, Yarbrough also serves as the director of *Tales from the Crypt*, a research and performance project that allows his students to explore history as well as



Leigh Yarbrough

From left: Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science History teacher Chuck Yarbrough, Columbus Mayor Robert Smith, Mt. Vernon Baptist Church Pastor Jeff James, and WTWG General Manager Edna Turner were presented with “Oasis of Freedom and Justice” Awards Saturday during a tribute dinner to Martin Luther King Jr. in Columbus.

people buried in historic Friendship Cemetery by attempting to uncover and tell their life stories. *Tales from the Crypt* was awarded the 2005 Governor’s Award for Excellence in the Arts and was recognized by the History Channel as one of 15 national finalists for the 2005 Save Our History classroom award.

“I’ve got one of the best teaching jobs in the country. Working with bright, ambitious, and intellectually curious students every day is the best part of my job,” he said.

In 1998 Yarbrough also put together a tour for the Mississippi Heritage Trust meeting in Columbus and has now expanded that tour with additional research. Sites include The Haven, home of two Free Men of Color from the 1830s; African American business locations downtown, including the Robert Gleed store site; Missionary Union Baptist Church, the first African American church in Northeast Mississippi; Temple Heights, an antebellum home that allows us to relate the story of domestic slaves; Union Academy, Columbus’s first public school for African Americans; Sandfield Cemetery, the oldest African

American cemetery in Columbus and burial site of several 19th-century African American leaders, including Mississippi Senator Robert Gleed.

In addition to the tour, his research and that of his students led to the inaugural Eighth of May Emancipation Celebration History program, which started on May 8, 2006, in Sandfield Cemetery. The Eighth of May is the local Emancipation Day in Columbus and the surrounding area. The celebration combined students performing dramatic monologues and traditional music performed by the MSMS Voices in Harmony Choir, a student-led gospel choir.

Yarbrough said his studies at the Center helped him view communities through a myriad of discipline-specific lenses while at the same time exploring the complexities of those communities. “The training I received in Southern Studies encouraged creative treatments of the South, and my work is simply a basic extension of that training as I encourage my students to do the same through various projects,” he said.

REBECCA LAUCK CLEARY

Alumni Report

Current Southern Studies student Mary Margaret Miller talked with seven Southern Studies M.A. graduates who are working toward or have recently received Ph.D. degrees. While the alma maters and areas of interest of each vary, these alums continue to share a common enthusiasm about the study of the American South.

Jay Langdale (M.A. 1994) is currently working as an adjunct faculty member in the history department at the University of Florida, where he teaches courses on the New South and the civil rights movement.

"I could never decide whether I liked history or literature best, so that is what brought me to the Southern Studies Program," said Langdale. "One of the great things about being at the Center is you get to do so many fun things."

Langdale says that while he was at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, he took a trip to Natchez with fellow Southern Studies classmate—and now wife—Jennifer Bryant. It was then that he met historian Bertram Wyatt-Brown and was encouraged to enter the Ph.D. program at Florida, work under Brown, and eventually teach. As a Ph.D. candidate at Florida, Langdale wrote his dissertation on cultural conservatism in the South and the 21st century.

"I like intellectual history, but I still can't make up my mind as to whether I like history or literature better," said Langdale.

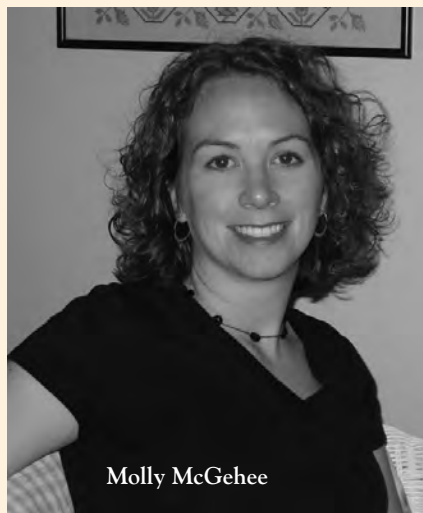
Langdale says that he incorporates both history and literature in his course on the New South, assigning short stories by Richard Wright, Flannery O'Connor, and William Faulkner as part of the course requirements.

While at the Center, he wrote his thesis on the Vanderbilt Agrarians and Walker Percy. He also participated in an exchange at the College of William and Mary while completing the Southern Studies master's program.

Langdale and his wife have a two-year-old son, Alex.



From left: Jennifer, Jay, and Alex Langdale



Molly McGehee

Molly McGehee (M.A. 2000) is completing a Ph.D. at Emory University's Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts where she is writing her dissertation on post-World War II Atlanta women journalists and fiction writers. McGehee's dissertation focuses specifically on the Southern and Atlanta imaginaries constructed in the fiction and nonfiction writings of Celestine Sibley, Anne Rivers Siddons, and Pearl Cleage.

"I entered the Southern Studies Program wanting to pursue a career in academia," said McGehee. "The Ph.D. was the next logical step in achieving that goal. The Southern Studies

Program helped to deepen my knowledge of and interest in Southern history and literature; it also revealed to me the value of interdisciplinary studies. So the transition to a doctoral program in American Studies turned out to be a natural one."

While at the University of Mississippi, McGehee wrote her master's thesis on the intellectual history of the Women of the Ku Klux Klan during the 1920s. After completing the Ph.D. program at Emory, she hopes to begin publishing and teaching at a college or university. In addition to her studies, McGehee has a growing interest in digital scholarly resources such as digital archival collections and online scholarly journals like SouthernSpaces.org.

Peter Slade (M.A. 1999) received a Ph.D. in religious studies at the University of Virginia in June 2006 and is now working as an assistant professor of religion at Ashland University in Ashland, Ohio.

"I'm in the middle of Amish country, so there is plenty of regional culture," said Slade. "Thanks to the Southern Studies Program, I've already had my students go out and do interviews and fieldwork. I'm continuing the legacy of Bill Ferris."

Slade teaches courses on church history, as well as religion and the civil rights movement. While at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, Slade worked with the Ole Miss Gospel Choir and served as an emcee on the *Thacker Mountain Radio* show.

"I met Charles Marsh when he read from his book at *Thacker Mountain*," said Slade. "I was invited into the PhD program by Marsh and went to Virginia."

While in Charlottesville, Slade wrote a dissertation entitled "Open Friendship in a Closed Society: Mission Mississippi and a Theology of Friendship," which "brings the lived experience of an ecumenical racial reconciliation initiative in Jackson, Mississippi, into conversation with academic theologies of reconciliation and friendship."

Drawn to Mississippi by blues music, Slade entered the Southern Studies Program after obtaining a theology degree from Anders University in Scotland. Slade says he wanted to do a summer course on blues music in the American South and circuitously ended up on the phone with Charles Wilson, who encouraged him to come to the Center.

Slade met his wife, Libby Moore-Slade, while at Virginia. They have two children, four-month-old Jacob and two-year-old Anna. In his spare time, Slade enjoys listening to good music and changing diapers.

Kerry Taylor (M.A. 1997) is working toward a Ph.D. in history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he is finishing a dissertation on labor movements among civil rights workers.

"The project examines the late 1960s



Kerry Taylor



Peter Slade with daughter, Anna, wife, Libby, and son, Jacob, in utero

and early 1970s 'turn to the working class' by activists in the civil rights movement and the New Left," said Taylor. "The 1970s would require the participation and leadership of the American working class, so they left college campuses and took jobs in factories and as labor organizers."

While at the Center, Taylor wrote a thesis on the Providence Cooperative Farm in Holmes County, Mississippi. After leaving Oxford, he worked for five years with the Martin Luther King Jr. Papers Project as part of a long-term effort toward publishing King's speeches, correspondence, and sermons. Taylor says he was driven to the Ph.D. program at UNC-Chapel Hill in part by his work with the King papers.

After completing his Ph.D., Taylor hopes to teach and continue researching and writing about 20th-century U.S. history, labor movements, social movements, and the 1960s.

Bert Way (M.A. 2000) is completing the Ph.D. program in history at the University of Georgia where he is writing a dissertation on 20th-century development of ecological conservation in the longleaf pine-grassland forest.

"My dissertation is about how the impetus for conservation changed from concerns about bodily health, aesthetics, and hunting into a concern for biodiversity and ecological integrity," said Way.

Way explored the environmental history of the antebellum Mississippi Delta while at the Center. The Mississippi Historical Society honored his thesis work on the processes of settlement, production, and environmental change in the Delta region with the Glover Moore Prize for best master's thesis on Mississippi history.

"Working with Robbie Ethridge, Ted Ownby, and Charles Wilson was a great experience and they helped me to realize that working as a historian could be fulfilling work," said Way.

After completing the Southern Studies Program, Way joined the Peace Corps, where he worked in agroforestry in the Dominican Republic, establishing tree nurseries for reforestation and fruit crops.

Way says he hopes to teach after completing the doctoral program at Georgia. In between researching and writing his dissertation, Way enjoys the outdoors and playing the guitar.

Bland Whitley (M.A. 1996) is working in the publications division of the University of Virginia Library, where he focuses primarily on the *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, a multivolume reference work that encompasses historical biographies of famed Virginians. Whitley received a Ph.D. in history from the University of Florida in 2003. While at Florida, he worked under Fitzhugh Brundage and expanded his Southern Studies master's thesis on postbellum Mississippi political culture into his dissertation.

"My dissertation was chronologically



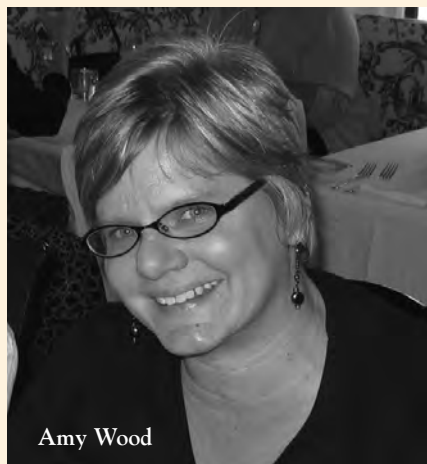
Bert Way and an anonymous Elvis.



A small group of Southern Studies graduates recently got together for a reunion in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Pictured clockwise from the top are Kerry Taylor (1997), Bland Whitley (1996), Mason Torian Whitley, Amy Wood (1995), Sarah Torian (1997), and Karen Glynn (1995).

broader (ca. 1865–1915) than my master’s thesis and focused far more heavily on the religious aspects of Mississippi political culture, that is, how Democrats incorporated evangelical styles and practices into their rhetoric and campaign events,” said Whitley. “It also traced the development of narratives about the Reconstruction era and how those narratives, whether imbedded in political rhetoric or historical memories, shaped Democratic political power.”

In addition to his work at the Virginia’s library, Whitley serves as an editor for the *Journal of Southern Religion*, an online academic publication. He and his wife, Sarah Torian (M.A. 1997), have an 18-month-old son, Mason.



Amy Wood

Amy Wood (M.A. 1995) is currently fulfilling a postdoctoral fellowship at the Center for the Study of the American South at the University of

North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she is completing a book about lynching, spectacle, and spectatorship in the South. An assistant professor of history at Illinois State University since 2003, Wood will return from leave this summer to continue teaching courses in American cultural and intellectual history and the New South.

After completing the graduate program in Southern Studies, Wood entered the Ph.D. program in American Studies at Emory University. While working toward the Ph.D. she wrote a dissertation entitled “Spectacles of Suffering: Witnessing Lynching in the South.” This piece is currently being revised for publication by the University of North Carolina Press in an upcoming series of interdisciplinary perspectives on the South. Charles Wilson is editor of the series.

“I do feel like the core of my intellectual interests, particularly my interest in the relationship between cultural rituals, gender, and violence, germinated in the Southern Studies Program, especially working with Ted Ownby and Charles Wilson,” said Wood. “Teaching Southern history to ISU students, most of whom have never really left Illinois, is interesting, to say the least. They have all the usual misconceptions and prejudices about the South, so I spend a lot of class time trying to give them the flavor and texture of the South using photographs, memoirs, music, and fiction.”

Before joining the Illinois State staff, Wood spent one year as a visiting professor at Emory University.

MARY MARGARET MILLER

The Natchez Pilgrimage will celebrate its 75th year March 10 through April 14, 2007. Tours of 28 antebellum mansions are offered during this five-week event, and the Historic Natchez Pageant, a musical production depicting scenes of the Old South, will involve over 200 local performers in elaborate period costumes. For details, check the Web site www.natchezpilgrimage.com/.



Regional Upcoming Events of Interest Roundup

Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama, will host its 14th Summer Institute of Christian Spirituality comprised of biblical, historical, pastoral, and oral courses led by faculty from its division of philosophy and theology as well as visiting faculty. Session 1 will be held June 3-9, and session 2 will be June 10-16. Contact Pat Warren, coordinator of the Institute, at 251-380-4672 / pwarren@shc.edu or visit the Web site www.shc.edu/lllgrad/grad/theology/institutes/sics/.

(continued from page 1)

Brown had many literary friends who have welcomed the opportunity to participate in the conference, including Harry Crews, Mark Richard, Kevin Canty, Clyde Edgerton, Steve Yarborough, Andre Dubus III, and Jill McCorkle. His friendships were wide, including musicians who will also be a part of the program. Texans Robert Earl Keen and Alejandro Escovedo, the latter of whom toured briefly with Brown in an innovative words-and-music show, will share their memories of Brown's musical interests.

Tim Lee is producing a CD of music related to Brown, performed by his musician friends, and he will also participate in the conference. Brown's editor, Shannon Ravenel, from Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, will share her reflections.

Brown had theatrical and film connections, as he worked on screenplays and saw his own work produced. Actors Arliss Howard and Debra Winger starred in the film of Brown's book *Big Bad Love*, and they will be here to reflect on his interest in the film. *The Rough South of Larry Brown*, a documentary by Gary Hawkins, will be shown at the conference, as well as *Big Bad Love*, *100 Proof*, and the *Rough South of Harry Crews*—all of which had Brown's involvement. Richard Corley, artistic director of Madison Repertory Theatre, will come down from Wisconsin to talk about his friendship with Larry Brown and their collaboration on the stage version of the novel *Dirty Work*. It originally played at the Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., in January 1994 and has enjoyed subsequent performances, including a production at the Hoka Theatre in the author's hometown on March 30–April 2, 1995, during the third Oxford Conference for the Book and the 58th Southern Literary Festival.

The University of Mississippi Archives will have a Larry Brown exhibition, which will be featured in a luncheon on "Larry Brown as a Man of Letters," with Jake Mills speaking on Friday, March 23, at noon. Tom Rankin, director of the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University and Brown's longtime friend, will present an exhibition of 24



Arliss Howard



Shannon Ravenel



Debra Winger



Harry Crews

photographs of Larry Brown, with the exhibition opening at Barnard Observatory's Gammill Gallery on March 19 and hanging through May 14.

The conference will be a family affair, with the participation of many of Brown's close family, including his wife, Mary Annie, their children, Billy Ray, Shane, and LeAnne, and three grandchildren.

Other conference sessions will be devoted to young readers, readers as an endangered species, and poetry. Among other writers participating are Thomas Sayers Ellis, Shay Youngblood, Nickole Brown, David Galef, Kimiko Hahn, and LeAnne Howe. The national radio program *Whad'Ya Know* will be on campus Saturday morning, March 24, and conference participants will be encouraged to attend it at the Ford Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets are available by calling 662-915-7411 or visiting <https://www.ticketreturn.com/prod2/Buy.asp?EventID=16478> on the Web.

Other events include a breakfast with Russian writers, a visit with Italian publisher and author Carlo Feltrinelli, and a talk by Margaret Bradham Thornton about compiling and editing the *Notebooks* of Tennessee Williams. The conference begins with *Thacker Mountain Radio* on Thursday, March 22, at 5:30 p.m. and ends with a book signing at Square Books on Saturday, March 24, at 6:00 p.m.

CHARLES REAGAN WILSON

In Tune with Larry

In the last decade of his life, Larry Brown was as much an aspiring musician as he was a novelist. At times, maybe more so. He was a self-taught southpaw guitarist who had little interest in chords outside of G, C, and D. He loved making music late at night, usually, and almost always in the privacy of his “Cool Pad,” which is what he called his carport office, or in the company of pals. Listening to music was just as much a passion: “I lowride in the country in the evening and listen to music . . . just about every day of the year,” he wrote. “Music takes me to a place where I have been over and over and will be again, and it’s a place where you go inside a song with the people who are singing it and playing . . . the words and the melody are like familiar old friends you can hear from any time you want to.” His appreciation for music drew him to musicians, in Oxford and elsewhere, just as his writing as spare, haunting, and bluesy as any old-time ballad drew musicians to him. His Rolodex was a who’s who of roots music: He counted Robert Earl Keen, Ben Weaver, Brent Best, Vic Chesnutt, Cary Hudson, Duff Durrough, and Alejandro Escovedo as friends, among others, and even toured with Escovedo. The country star Tim McGraw was another devoted fan who currently holds the film options on some of Larry’s novels. The panel “Larry Brown and Music” will explore Larry’s love for music and his affinity for musicians, as well as musicians’ affinities for him, and will further delve into the overlaps between fiction writing and songwriting. To properly cap it off, a tribute concert will be held that night at Proud Larry’s, emceed by fellow



Alejandro Escovedo



Robert Earl Keen

Glen Rose

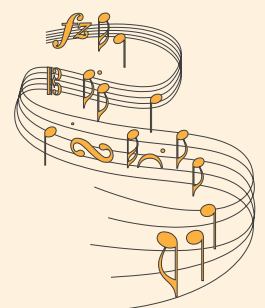
novelist/musician Clyde Edgerton and featuring some of Larry’s closest musical confidantes, with proceeds benefiting the Larry Brown Scholarship Fund at Lafayette High School. The weekend will see the release of a special, conference-edition version of *Just One More*, a Larry Brown tribute CD produced by former Oxonian Tim Lee and distributed by Bloodshot Records (with proceeds, again, going to the scholarship fund). In short: a great weekend for three-chord Southern lit.

JONATHAN MILES



Tim Lee

Thomas Ivy



Bloodshot Records to Release *Just One More, A Musical Tribute to Larry Brown*

“Larry Brown writes like a force of nature.” — Pat Conroy

“Larry Brown discovers real stuff, like great writers do. He’s been out there, and reports it beautifully.” — Barry Hannah

“Whatever he writes, I will read.”
— Harry Crews

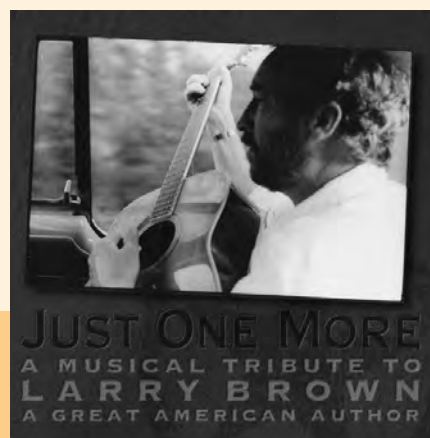
Larry Brown’s business card listed his occupation as “Human Being.” Like many other professional human beings, Larry loved music. He felt music, and it showed in his writing. As he moved through the world, Larry got to know a lot of musicians, and a lot of musicians got to know Larry, either personally or through his work. *Just One More, A Musical Tribute to Larry Brown* is a compilation of tunes by artists who were his friends, fans, and peers. With 19 tracks, 12 of which are previously unreleased, the album has contributions from a wide range of critically acclaimed artists, among them Alejandro Escovedo (with whom Larry performed periodically), T-Model Ford, Vic Chesnutt, Jim Dickinson (with Duff Dorough), Robert Earl Keen, Cary Hudson (Blue Mountain), Brent Best (Slobberbone, The Drams), and the North Mississippi Allstars to name a few. Some of these songs were written for the project, songs for Larry and about his characters, such as Caroline Herring’s “Song for Fay,” exploring the title character of *Fay*, a novel published in 2000. The album closes with a song performed by Larry himself,

accompanied by Clyde Edgerton, a Southern novelist of great renown.

“The simple concept of this disc was to put together a mix tape of sorts, the type of thing that Larry would have enjoyed listening to as he drove his little truck into the gloam with a cooler full of beer and an ass pocket of something that burns a little bit on the way down,” explains producer Tim Lee. “I knew him and I admired his work, and you didn’t have to know Larry well to have a keen awareness of his love of music.” Mary Annie Brown, Larry’s wife, concurred, saying, “Larry absolutely loved music. I think he wished sometimes that he had the talent to do music for a living. He always played his guitar—every night. If he had to skip playing, he would always say he felt like the day was wasted.”

His love of music led him to write for

No Depression magazine on artists he loved, and to contribute liner notes for Oxford band Blue Mountain’s *Homegrown* album that are a model of poetic depiction. When Brown suffered a fatal heart attack in 2004, he was nearly finished with another novel, *A Miracle of Catfish*, which Algonquin Books will publish in March 2007. *Just One More, A Musical Tribute to Larry Brown* will be in stores May 22, 2007.



Track List

1. Greg Brown - *Blue Car*
2. Bo Ramsey - *Forget You*
3. Cary Hudson - *Song in C*
4. Caroline Herring - *Song for Fay*
5. Alejandro Escovedo - *Baby's Got New Plans*
6. Scott Miller & the Commonwealth - *Thirsty Fingers*
7. Brent Best - *Robert Cole*
8. Pieta Brown - *Another Place in Time*
9. T-Model Ford - *Love Me*
10. Robert Earl Keen - *Counting on You*
11. Ben Weaver - *Here's to My Disgrace*
12. Tate Moore - *Mountain in Mississippi*
13. Tim Lee & Susan Bauer Lee - *The Bridge*
14. Madison Smartt Bell & Wyn Cooper - *Going Down with Larry Brown*
15. Vic Chesnutt - *Fish*
16. North Mississippi Allstars w/Otha Turner & the Rising Star Fife & Drum Band - *Glory*
17. Jim Dickinson & Duff Dorough - *I'll Remember You*
18. Larry Brown w/Clyde Edgerton - *Don't Let the Door*



Special Edition CD Available for Book Conference

To celebrate the Oxford Conference for the Book, Bloodshot Records is making available a special edition of *Just One More* featuring eight bonus songs and a 12-page booklet featuring contributions from Clyde Edgerton, Jonny Miles, Tom Rankin, Madison Smartt Bell, and several musicians who participated in the project. *Just a Few More* will only be available during the Book Conference or from www.bloodshotrecords.com.



Other Events Related to the 2007 Oxford Conference for the Book

ELDERHOSTEL PROGRAM, MARCH 22–25

An Elderhostel program will take place during the 2007 Oxford Conference for the Book. 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 program coordinator Carolyn Vance Smith in Natchez, 601-446-1208, or e-mail her at Carolyn.Smith@colin.edu.

CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP, MARCH 21

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 on the Oxford Square. 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 conference, attendance at all conference events, lunch and refreshments on Wednesday, lunch and dinner on Thursday, lunch and dinner on Friday, lunch on Saturday, and brunch on Sunday. Also, each registrant will receive a copy of *Story Matters: Contemporary Short Story Writers Share the Creative Process*. The fee does not include lodging. First come, first served.

MISSISSIPPI DELTA LITERARY TOUR, MARCH 19–22

Experience the place, the people, the food, and the music that inspired Mississippi writers by joining a tour organized by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture. The program is based in Greenwood, with day trips to Indianola, home of blues legend B. B. King, *New York Times* food editor and cookbook author Craig Claiborne, and fiction writer Steve Yarbrough; Greenville, home of William Alexander Percy and other writers; and Clarksdale, childhood home Tennessee Williams. The Delta tour is \$475 per person for all program activities, eight meals, and local transportation. **The fee does not include lodging.**

Group accommodations are offered at the Alluvian, in downtown Greenwood (www.thealluvian.com). **Rooms at the Alluvian require a separate registration** and are priced at a discounted rate of \$155. Call 866-600-5201 and ask for the "Literary Tour" rate. Rooms have also been set aside at the Greenwood Best Western, 662-455-5777, or the Hampton Inn, 662-455-7985.



Larry Brown. Photo by Jack Cofield.
Courtesy Algonquin Books.

Additional details about the Delta Literary Tour (March 19–22, 2007), the 14th Oxford Conference for the Book (March 22–24, 2007), and related events are posted on the Web site www.oxfordconferenceforthebook.com/.

The 2007 conference is partially funded by the University of Mississippi, a contribution from the R&B Feder Foundation for the Beaux Arts, and grants from the Mississippi Humanities Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Oxford Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Yoknapatawpha Arts Council.

The Write Stuff for Kids

Each year the Oxford Conference for the Book showcases two writers for young people. All Oxford-area fifth- and ninth-grade students (nearly 1,000 readers) receive their own copies of books from the selected authors, courtesy of the Junior Auxiliary of Oxford, the Lafayette County Literary Council, and Square Books Jr., and also have a chance to hear the authors speak about writing and reading during the conference. Authors in the past have included Mildred D. Taylor (*Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*), John Green (*Looking for Alaska*), T. A. Barron (*Lost Years of Merlin* series), and Sharon M. Draper (*Hazelwood High* series).

The 2007 young people's authors are, for fifth graders, Karen Hesse, and for ninth graders, Laurie Halse Anderson.

Hesse, a 2002 MacArthur "Genius" Grant recipient, is the author of more than 15 books for children and young adults, many focusing on young protagonists who cope with extreme environmental and political issues. Among them are *Phoenix Rising*, which follows 13-year-old Nyle as she struggles with the loss of a friend in a New England nuclear power plant accident; the 1996 *Publishers Weekly* Best Book of the Year *Music of Dolphins*, a story about Mila, a young girl raised by dolphins who is discovered by scientists on a desert island off the Florida coast. As the scientists learn more about Mila's extraordinary animal upbringing, she, too, learns of the hardships all young people must face as they grow up; and *Out of the Dust*, the 1997 Newbery Award winner written entirely in unrhymed verse from the perspective of 14-year-old Billie Jo, a girl whose family suffers through the Depression in the Oklahoma dust bowl. Other works by Hesse include *Come On, Rain*, *A Time for Angels*, *Aleutian Sparrow*, and *Stowaway*. All fifth-grade students will receive a copy of *Out of the Dust* to read and talk about in class prior to meeting the author. Hesse lives in Vermont with her husband.

Anderson is the author of the *Wild at Heart* books, the latest series from American Girl—the doll-and-book



Karen Hesse



Laurie Halse Anderson

company aimed at tweens—about a group of middle-school-aged veterinary clinic volunteers. *Wild at Heart* stories chronicle the adventures of the kids and their animal charges through *Charlotte's Webb-meets-Babysitters' Club* tales about friendship, responsibility, and the love and heartbreak we humans experience through our beloved pets. Anderson is perhaps best known, however, for her young adult novel *Speak*, the story of Melinda, a teenaged girl who, after a summertime party gets out of hand, calls the police and ultimately becomes the

outcast of her high school. Readers don't learn the root of Melinda's trouble until midway through the book, when her situation becomes much more serious. *Speak* was a 2000 Prinz Honor Book and a finalist for the 1999 National Book Award. Other works of Anderson's include *Fever, 1793*, a historical novel about a 14-year-old girl named Mattie, living during the Philadelphia yellow-fever epidemic of 1793, and the picture books *No Time for Mother's Day* and *Turkey Pox*. The ninth graders will



Sarah Combs

receive copies of the novel *Speak* to read and discuss at school before meeting the book's author. Anderson lives with her family in Ambler, Pennsylvania.

"When it was published [in 1997], Karen Hesse's gorgeous novel-in-verse appeared as an entirely fresh approach to the [Young Adult] genre, and what's more: each gritty poem in *Out of the Dust* reads like a poem, and each is clearly the work of a gifted poet and storyteller," says Sarah Combs, the assistant director at the Carnegie Center for Literacy in Lexington, Kentucky (and Endangered Species panel member). Combs is an avid reader of young adult fiction, having been previously employed at BWI, a book distributor for libraries where she exclusively read and recommended books for children and teenagers.

“S. E. Hinton’s *The Outsiders* was perhaps the book that established the genre in the first place,” Combs adds. “*The Outsiders* was published in 1967, which leads me to believe that at some point since then, some fresh new voice arrived on the scene and with it came the ‘renaissance’ of the YA lit world that is alive and well today. I think that voice probably belonged to Laurie Halse Anderson and to Melinda, the heroine of *Speak*. It’s a brave, important piece of work, and I think teenagers loved it when it was published and love it still because in it—in all of Anderson’s books—they catch unexpected glimpses of themselves.”

All Oxford-area fifth and ninth graders will have the opportunity to meet with Hesse and Anderson during the Thursday morning Literature for Young Readers panels at the Ford Center on campus. In addition, the fifth graders at Lafayette Elementary School will write historical fiction poems, and the Junior Auxiliary is hosting a “Coffeehouse Poetry Reading” the week following the conference. Selected students will read their work in front of the entire fifth grade. The students at Central Elementary are doing a similar poetry project, but instead of hosting a poetry reading, the Junior Auxiliary will be displaying their work at the Oxford-Lafayette Public Library. All students, teachers, parents, and other fans of the authors’ work are invited to attend a book signing at Square Books Jr. on Thursday, March 22, at 3:30 p.m.

SALLY CASSADY LYON

OXFORD

MISSISSIPPI

CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

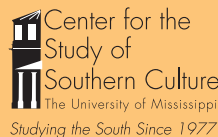
For tourist information, contact:
 Oxford Convention and Visitors Bureau
 102 Ed Perry Boulevard • Oxford, MS 38655
 telephone 800-758-9177 662-232-2367 • fax 662-232-8680
 Internet: www.oxfordcvb.com

For information about books and authors, contact:



Square Books
 160 Courthouse Square, Oxford, MS 38655
 telephone 800-468-4001 • 662-236-2262
 fax 662-234-9630
 Internet: www.squarebooks.com/

For more information concerning the conference, contact:



Center for the Study of Southern Culture
 The University of Mississippi
 P.O. Box 1848
 University, MS 38677-1848
 telephone 662-915-5993
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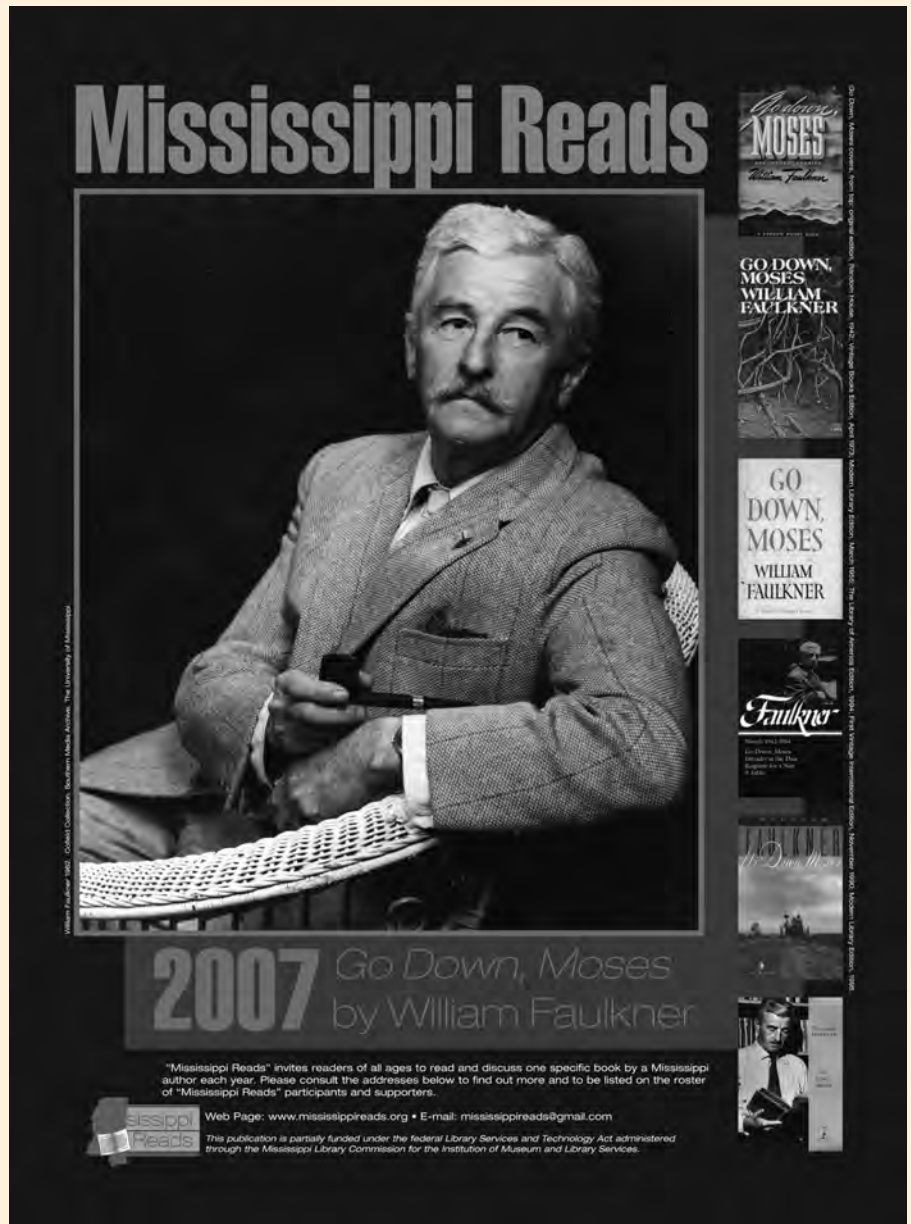
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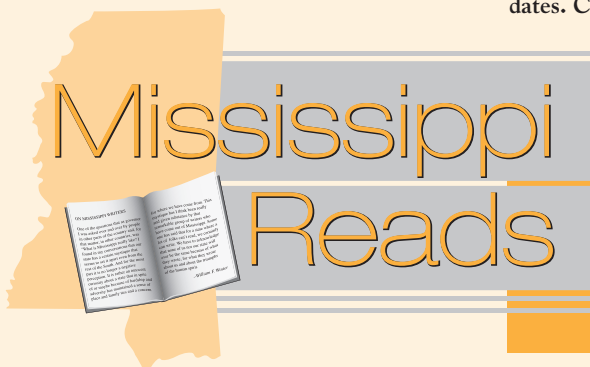
“Mississippi Reads” was recently initiated to encourage readers of all ages to read one specific book by a Mississippi author each year. The first book, the choice for 2007, is *Go Down, Moses* by William Faulkner, who is regarded as America’s foremost writer of the 20th century. Set in the author’s mythic Yoknapatawpha County and the nearby Mississippi Delta, the book tells the story of the McCaslin family, both white and black, and explores race, love, marriage, land, environment, history, religion, and other major themes. “The Bear,” the fourth of the seven parts of *Go Down, Moses*, laments the vanishing wilderness and is perhaps Faulkner’s best known work.

The Mississippi Library Commission has helped publicize the project by distributing 800 posters and 30,000 bookmarks illustrated with a Faulkner portrait by photographer Jack Cofield and the covers of six vintage editions of *Go Down, Moses* published between 1942 and 1995. Tracy Carr, Specialized Reference Manager and Center for the Book Coordinator for the Mississippi Library Commission, coordinated distribution of posters and bookmarks and is the contact for libraries participating in the project.

MLC is also circulating two traveling book club kits, which contain 20 copies of *Go Down, Moses* and other supporting materials. Nearly 250 libraries and bookstores throughout the state are making copies of the book available to patrons, and many are sponsoring discussion groups, readings, talks, and other programs about *Go Down, Moses*.



Copies of the “Mississippi Reads” poster are available to individuals for \$10.00 each plus \$2.50 postage and handling. Mississippi residents add 7 percent sales tax. Send all orders to the Center for the Study of Southern Culture with a check, made payable to the University of Mississippi, or with Visa or MasterCard account number and expiration dates. Credit cards orders also may be made by calling 800-390-3527.



The “Mississippi Reads” project is partially funded under the federal Library Services and Technology Act administered through the Mississippi Library Commission for the Institution of Museum and Library Services.



Members of the Our Time Book Club of Oxford who met on January 31 to discuss *Go Down, Moses* are, from left (front) Deborah Purnell, Rhonda Reed, and (back) Casonya Thompson, Teresa Coleman, Andrea Odom, and Keysha Ware.

“From the vantage point of our lives as African American women in 2007, the women of the Our Time Book Club found reading a book that was set during a time when black people were either slaves or had very limited rights and options in their interactions with whites to be a disturbing experience, but one that made us appreciate how many real changes in society there have been. Though Faulkner changed the names, we were intrigued by trying to figure out the references to real places and families in the Oxford area. We found it interesting how Faulkner so deeply intertwined the lives of the black and the white branches of the McCaslin and Beauchamp families and by this was able to demonstrate how the actions of one person can have profound consequences for so many, even several generations later.” —Andrea Odom

Pamela Pridgen, director of the library at Hattiesburg and chair of the board of the Mississippi Library Commission, prepared the book club kits.

Dorothy Fitts, director of the Lafayette County and Oxford Library, has assisted “Mississippi Reads” by having Kenaz Shun Worthem design and maintain the project’s Web site and assigning other staff members to respond to project e-mail. The First Regional Library System provides the server for the Web site.

Faulkner’s World: Photographs by Martin J. Dain, a traveling exhibition celebrating the author’s centennial in 1997, is now beginning an encore tour

in conjunction with the “Mississippi Reads” project. Accompanying the 40 photographs in the exhibition are Lisa N. Howorth’s video *“Are You Walkin’ with Me?”: Sister Thea Bowman, William Faulkner, and African American Culture* and a copy of the book *Faulkner’s World: Photographs* by Martin J. Dain, published by the University Press of Mississippi. Financially assisted by the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council, the exhibition is currently on display at the Lafayette County and Oxford Library and will begin traveling to other libraries around the state, beginning in April.

“Mississippi Reads” Contacts

WEB SITE

www.mississippireads.org

E-MAIL

mississippireads@gmail.com

Related Web Sites

Mississippi Arts Commission

www.arts.state.ms.us

Mississippi Humanities Council

www.mshumanities.org/pages/

Mississippi Library Commission

www.mlc.lib.ms.us

Mississippi Alliance for Arts Education

Integrating Music and Literacy

www.msartsalliance.com/events/megaConf2005.htm

Mississippi Department of Education

www.mde.k12.ms.us/

Mississippi Library Association

www.misslib.org/

Mississippi Literacy Resource Center

www.ihl.state.ms.us/gol/index.html

Center for Faulkner Studies

Teaching Faulkner Newsletter

Teaching Go Down, Moses and Other Books

www6.semo.edu/cfs/teaching_faulkner.htm

American Library Association

“One Book, One Community Guide”

www.ala.org/ala/ppo/onebookguide.pdf

Center for the Book in the Library of Congress

List of “One Book” Projects

www.loc.gov/cfbook/

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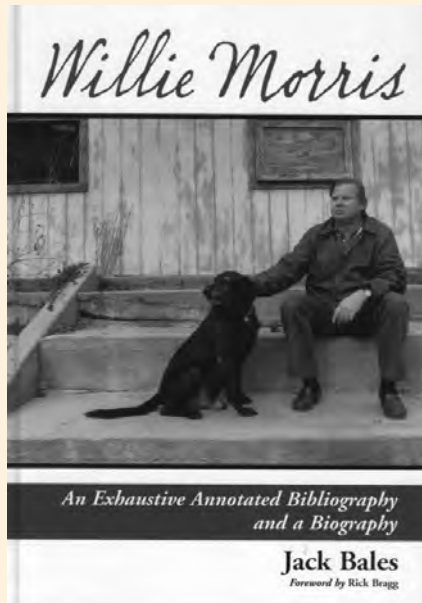
Willie Morris: An Exhaustive Annotated Bibliography and a Biography.

By Jack Bales. Foreword by Rick Bragg. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2006. 393 pages. \$75.00 cloth.

In Search of Willie Morris: The Mercurial Life of a Legendary Writer and Editor.

By Larry L. King. New York: PublicAffairs, 2006. 353 pages. \$26.95 cloth.

Early in the 1980s, a powerful threesome brought new vigor to Oxford and the University of Mississippi: Square Books, the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, and Willie Morris. As writer in residence, Morris invited James Dickey, William Styron, and other famous friends to read to his classes and to anyone else who could find a seat. I was occasionally in those crowds, and I haven't forgotten the excitement and good spirit of each gathering. Morris encouraged the freshman Donna Tartt and the law student John Grisham long before they reached the bestseller lists. On Faculty Row and at the Hoka theater-café, he conducted Mississippi-style salons. Years later, one of my students asked if I would direct an independent study course on Willie Morris. We enjoyed discussing his treatments of family, race, politics, and the South in such thoughtful works as *North Toward Home*, *Terrains of the Heart*,



and *The Courting of Marcus Dupree*; but we were frustrated that the secondary bibliography included no books on Morris's considerable achievement. Thanks to Jack Bales and Larry L. King, those books have finally arrived.

Bales, a librarian and scholar, knew Willie Morris for four years before his death. In 1995, he sent the author of *My Dog Skip* a fan letter and quickly became a friend. Journalist and playwright Larry L. King, Morris's colleague at *Harper's* magazine, knew him for almost four decades. Bales and King both describe the many sides of Willie Morris, from Yazoo City prankster to Rhodes scholar and urban sophisticate; and they gratefully acknowledge each other's help in researching Morris's life and career. Yet, the biographers' moving tributes are as diverse as their front covers. Bales's Morris is photographed outside a weather-beaten building near Oxford, in January 1982, a middle-aged man in a windbreaker,

with a relaxed hand on Pete, the beloved black Lab who sometimes accompanied him to classes on campus. King's "mercurial" Morris wears a dark suit and striped tie in his New York office, cigarette in hand, circa 1965. Between them, Bales and King provide a rich foundation for all future studies of the author-editor and his unusually large body of work.

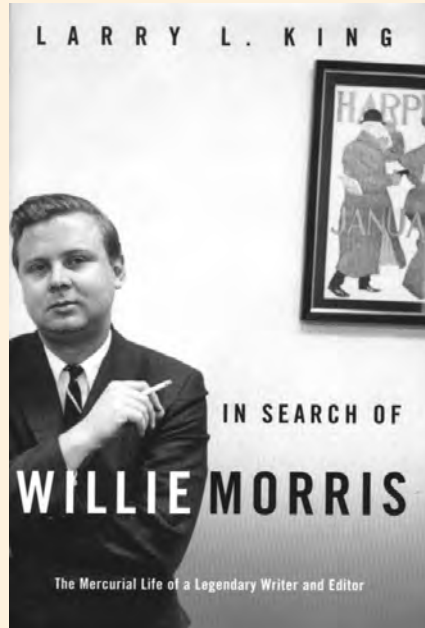
Bales's biography fills only 75 pages of *Willie Morris: An Exhaustive Annotated Bibliography and a Biography*; but the pages are oversized, dense with details, and generously illustrated. Bales frequently cites Morris's lifelong friend Ralph Atkinson, who shared pictures from their years as children and teenagers. A highlight of Bales's volume is his inclusion of more than 50 photographs, interspersed throughout the biography and enhanced by exceptional captions. At Ralph Atkinson's birthday party in October 1944, a mischievous Willie Morris (a month before his own 10th birthday) waves from the back row. In one of the last photographs, from August 1999, the photojournalist David Rae Morris stands between Willie Morris's burial site and the legendary Witch of Yazoo's tombstone, on which David had placed a rubber snake "as a tribute to his father's love of practical jokes."

Bales's succinct biography is an excellent introduction to the seventh-generation Mississippian, who spent over 25 years away from home developing a career as a muckraking journalist and brilliant editor, but who came back to stay in 1979. Part 2 of *Willie Morris*, however, is literally the center of the volume, with Bales's 964

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

annotated entries (some of them a full column long) on Morris's 23 books, his hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles, scores of contributions to books, and a number of book reviews and letters to the editor. Morris himself alerted the bibliographer to many pieces. The more than 1,000 annotated entries in part 3, a secondary bibliography, indicate just how widely Morris and his books were covered by the media, from the *Yazoo Daily Herald* to the *Wall Street Journal*. A poignant part 4, "A Sense of History: Tracing the Civil War with Willie Morris," reprints three little known columns from the *Washington Star*, Morris's account of a two-week journey in February 1976 to several battlefields with James Jones, a good friend and World War II novelist, and their teenaged sons.

Like Jack Bales, Larry L. King consulted a staggering number of sources in his research, including the 135-box Willie Morris Collection at the University of Mississippi's J. D. Williams Library. (Bales contributed seven archival boxes to this collection last summer.) King's *In Search of Willie Morris* fleshes out many of the personal and professional relationships, controversies, and tensions that Bales describes only briefly. Because King was a major contributor to *Harper's* during the period Morris served as the magazine's youngest-ever editor in chief, he has particular insight into Morris's New York years. As the word "mercurial" in his subtitle implies, he often reflects upon Morris's shifts between gregarious good humor and dark withdrawal, basing his remarks on almost 40 years of close observation. More informal than Bales in his attitude toward his subject, King groups chapters under headings like "Dead Dogs and Melancholy Madness: At Odds with Uncle Sam, Local Cops,



and a Few Old Pals" and "Recovery: Finding a Good Woman and Jump-Starting a Stalled Career." Both biographers provide abundant evidence that Morris's second marriage, to University Press of Mississippi editor JoAnne Prichard, was unusually happy and productive. Living in Jackson during the 1990s, Morris strengthened his ties with Eudora Welty, former Governor William Winter, and other friends.

When King spoke about Willie Morris at the 2006 Oxford Conference for the Book, he delighted the audience with anecdotes and a spontaneous outburst of "Jesus on the Five-Yard Line." That was the song Morris tricked King into singing at a *Harper's* staff meeting; and it was the song King sang in Rome on the day Morris was buried in Mississippi: "Loud and clear, if not excessively tuneful, never mind a few strange looks from Colosseum visitors. It seemed to help where I was hurting." In 1978, Willie Morris published *James Jones: A Friendship*, a memoir about his Long Island neighbor—"warts and all," says King. King's biography does not ignore Morris's warts; nor does it betray his

friendship. For Bales, too, friendship was a crucial impetus for his work on Morris, from his editing of *Conversations with Willie Morris* (2000) and *Shifting Interludes: Selected Essays of Willie Morris* (2002) through the hundreds of hours he spent verifying entries for his combination biography and bibliography. Famous for his generosity to other authors, Mississippi's "nonfiction writer of the millennium" has well earned the admiration of Jack Bales and the frustrated love of his "amigo" Larry L. King.

JOAN WYLIE HALL

Leavin' a Testimony: Portraits from Rural Texas.

Photographs and text by Patsy Cravens. Foreword by John B. Boles. Afterword by Bob Patten. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006. 303 pages, 109 duotones. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006. \$34.95 cloth.

Rough Beauty.

Photographs by Dave Anderson. Introduction by Anne Wilkes Tucker. Stockport, England: Dewi Lewis Publishing, 2006. 120 pages, 79 duotones. \$40.00 cloth.

These two recent books use photographs and the words of local residents to explore community life in different parts of rural Texas. *Leavin' a Testimony* by Patsy Cravens looks at Colorado County in the south-central part of the state. It is the more purely documentary of the two but disappointing on the whole. Dave Anderson's *Rough Beauty* focuses on the town of Vidor in extreme southeast Texas, not far from the Gulf and only 18 miles from the

Louisiana border. It is a more satisfying book but at times unclear as to what it hopes to achieve. Both books concentrate on local people and try to relate their lives to the physical places where they've lived. Both rely on the voices of their subjects (Cravens substantially, Anderson sparingly) for text. Both authors profess admiration, even reverence, for their subjects. Beyond that, the similarities end.

Leavin' a Testimony is exhaustive and, by the time one nears its end, exhausting. During the 1980s and 1990s, Patsy Cravens conducted oral histories with and made portraits of hundreds of Colorado County residents. Nearly all of the people she interviewed and photographed were elderly, about two-thirds of them African Americans. Many of the portraits became part of a traveling exhibition that toured Texas in the early 1990s, and portions of some of the interviews were included in *Coming through Hard Times*, a documentary video Cravens produced in 1995. Although it's unclear if some of the material in the book is more recent (an annoyance that providing dates could have avoided), *Leavin' a Testimony* includes a larger selection of photographs (109 in all) and texts drawn from interviews (89) than were in the original exhibition and video.

Unfortunately, they add up to more than many readers are going to want to wade through, in large part because so much of the material lacks variety. Most of the people Cravens interviewed tell of simple, hard-working lives, marred by poverty, and in some cases racism, but nonetheless remembered fondly for good times shared with family and friends. Before long, though, too many of these narratives start sounding the same, which has the effect of devaluing them all. One sympathizes with Cravens's desire to include so many of her friends' stories, but a more rigorous editing



process might have resulted in a more satisfying book. A further problem is that the photographs in *Leavin' a Testimony* mainly serve to reinforce the monotony. They are as repetitive (but not as informative or interesting) as the personal narratives and, as images, largely undistinguished, made doubly so by repetition. More than a third of the book's pictures show people standing (or sitting) in front of (or on the front porch of) a small house, with many of these photographs made from too far away. Any one of them seems interchangeable with any other. One of the aims of documentary work is to look at the particularities of ordinary life with such clarity as to render it extraordinary, sometimes beautifully so. *Leavin' a Witness* does not do this. Instead, it makes the ordinary seem dull, which it is not.

Dave Anderson's *Rough Beauty* is an entirely different kind of book. Drawn to Vidor by its sordid reputation (justifiably or not, it is known throughout east Texas as a Klan stronghold), Anderson instead found a place where people, many of them living on the edge of poverty and constantly having to improvise to keep themselves and their families

afloat, have fashioned a culture that may seem coarse and intolerant to an outsider but whose interior is surprisingly nurturing. Vidor does not look to be a pretty place, at least not the parts Anderson shows us: do-it-yourself housing, abandoned machinery in various stages of disassembly, and sick animals are plentiful. But it also seems a place inhabited by people who actively care about each other and who organize their lives around that caring.

Or so Anderson tells us in an interview with curator Anne Wilkes Tucker printed at the end of the book. His photographs, though, may say something else or, rather, something more. Despite seeming documentary in intent, *Rough Beauty* is actually as much about making photographic art objects as exploring the realities of life in Vidor, Texas. The two are separate reasons for making photographs, although (since they do not have to be mutually exclusive) this is not always a problem. In *Rough Beauty*, however, these dual motivations at times conflict, which results in a certain amount of confusion. There are a number of fine documentary-style images in the book, some of them as beautiful as they are informative: a 70ish woman in T-shirt, shorts, and moccasins, leaf rake in one hand and cigarette in the other, stands before a smoldering pile of leaves and stares distrustfully at the camera; a bearded man holding a socket wrench, his baseball cap on backwards, poses with his two teenage sons among heaps of wrecked cars much taller than they are; a little blonde girl in flower-embroidered jeans and a T-shirt that reads "Cutie Pie" stands barefoot on hard bare dirt clutching a stuffed unicorn tightly to her side. These are only a few of many fine photographs in *Rough Beauty* that both inform us and tug at our hearts. There are other pictures, though, whose intent is less clear: a deer's severed foreleg in front of out-of-focus marshland; a close-up

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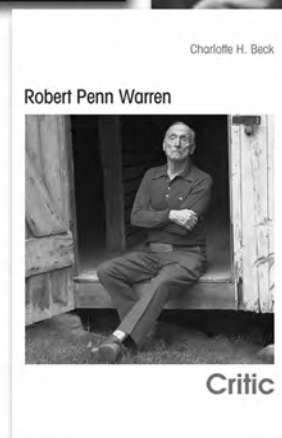
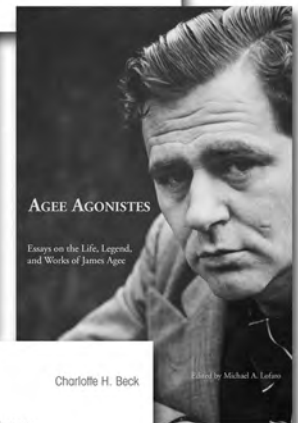
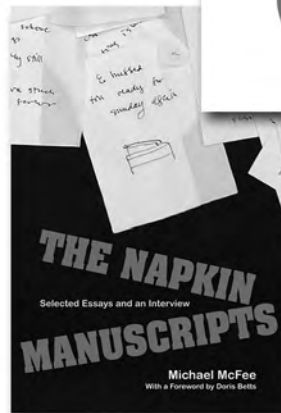
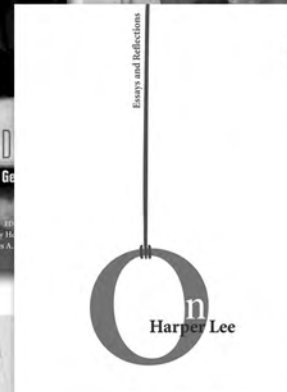
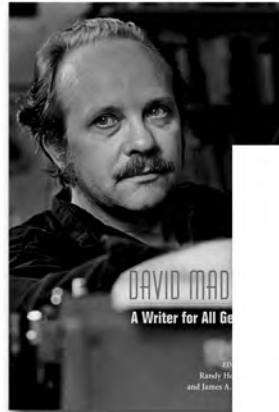
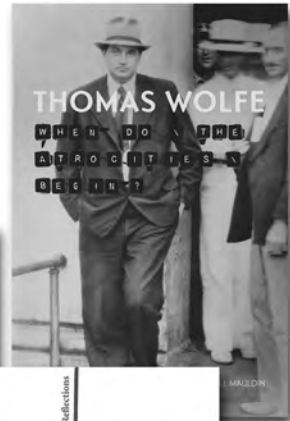
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David Madden

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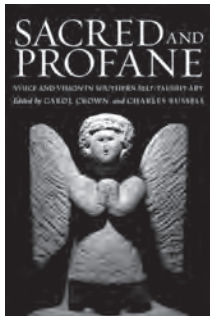


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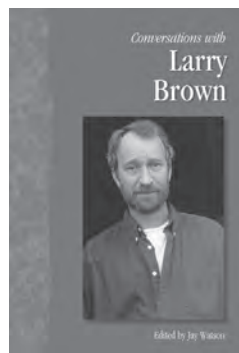
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of a baby in a cheerleader's uniform, its bald head brightened in the darkroom to an otherworldly glow; a dead raccoon in the middle of a road, tongue lolling from its mouth. In these images and others like them, the documentary impulse seems to have given way to a conscious quest for moodiness and/or the surreal—perhaps qualities evocative of Anderson's experience of Vidor but not necessarily any more representative of Vidor than anywhere else. This, of course, is one of the central issues in all forms of documentary: to what degree does the documentarian's sense of the world he/she explores conform to some aspect of its essential character, and to what degree is it the product of his/her unique personality? In *Rough Beauty*, the answer is to this question is unclear—not because Anderson has falsified anything, or consciously insisted on his own vision of Vidor to the exclusion of all others, but because his book doesn't make his reasons for photographing the community apparent. Was it to tell the world about Vidor, Texas, or to produce a set of photographs suitable for gallery walls? *Rough Beauty* accomplishes some of both, but it doesn't integrate the two into an entirely successful whole.

DAVID WHARTON



SOUTHERN FOODWAYS REGISTER

The Newsletter of the Southern Foodways Alliance

Meet SFA Filmmaker Joe York

If the Hollywood director Frank Capra had ever met SFA filmmaker Joe York, he might very well have made a film about him. Gary Cooper or Jimmy Stewart would have played York. And it would be set in a small, Southern town. The script would have tracked the life of the son of hard-working folks who seeks his way in the wide world. Think *Mr. York Goes to Oxford*.

Joe is a character. No doubt about that. He is sincere and zealous, funny and smart, talented and easy on the eyes. He also has a knack for directing attention to folks who would most likely never get it otherwise.

While studying anthropology at Auburn, digging up bones and artifacts from the Black Belt of Alabama to the Mayan ruins in Mexico, Joe became interested in the people, standing off to the side, watching students dig up their backyards. Not the dead but the living: the people who get overlooked until one day they are gone and all of a sudden we wish we had their story.

Joe ended up in Oxford, Mississippi (just the kind of romantic university town that Mr. Capra would have loved), obtained a master's in Southern Studies, and in the process bumped into the Southern Foodways Alliance. Falling for our mission of documentation and celebration, Joe found his place using his talent for visuals and storytelling to shoot short films highlighting the SFA's Ruth Fertel Keepers of the Flame: "The great thing about documenting these people is that we pay attention to the ones who don't get highlighted but have made great contributions to our culture. Take Bill Best for example, the man we made *Saving Seeds* about. Who would have thought that a fellow who collects seeds and grows heirloom beans and tomatoes would get a standing ovation from a room full of people? Bill certainly never did."

When asked about his artistic style—his voice and view—Joe brushes it off as just the luck of the shoot or good natural light, but really, his angles and focus are subtle yet clear vistas into the work or the life of the subject. Joe shows us the way a pitmaster takes a slow drag on his cigarette while waiting on a pig to cook. Joe's camera pauses on the elbow of an oysterman tonging in the Apalachicola Bay, or a man wiping his brow as he eats hot fried chicken in Nashville.

Just like those Capra movie heroes, Joe brings attention to the people we take for granted. "The screen is not just for stars, pretty people with writers standing behind," says Joe. "Put an oysterman on the screen. His story deserves to be told just like everyone else's. Seeing them on screen reminds us that not only are they here, but they belong here." And while it would be great to see Mr. York's character on the screen itself, perhaps he is where he belongs for the moment—behind the camera, telling the stories that preserve our culture.

ANGIE MOSIER

*Oh when our joints refuse to function
When we stand in need of unction
Bring us two pork chops apiece
A skillet, lots of room, and grease.*

— "SONG TO GREASE" FROM
SOUPSONGS BY ROY BLOUNT

Letter from the President

Grab your portable eating gear and join us for an exciting year of SFA programs and projects. This year promises to be great. Among the things to anticipate: Willie Mae Seaton will be at home in New Orleans frying chicken again by Mardi Gras!

Keep in mind that you can join our New Orleans oral history initiative by sharing a defining New Orleans food memory (call 888-841-6153) or by browsing our Web site to read samples of the poignant oral histories that Amy Evans has already collected, thanks to the generosity of the McIlhenny Company and the Fertel Foundation.

This year's Taste of the South weekend, February 16–18, at Blackberry Farm in Tennessee was a great success. Plans are well under way for an exciting Day Camp to the Shoals area of Alabama April 20–21 as well as a Field Trip to Charleston, South Carolina, June 22–25. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the fall Southern Foodways Symposium, October 25–28. Oh, and my fellow North Carolinians and I will host a SFA Day Camp on September 7–8 in and around Chapel Hill.

Stay tuned for more information about these programs. Please contact me, if you'd like to learn more about the SFA or share a suggestion.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Marcie Cohen Ferris
(ferrism@email.unc.edu)

Saving Willie Mae's Scotch House, One Weekend at a Time

On Friday, November 17, I drove to New Orleans to work on the Scotch House. My assignment upon arrival: paint the front door. This may not sound remarkable to anyone else, but to someone who participated in the demolition that began back in January, it's an exciting sign of progress.

When Hurricane Katrina destroyed the double-shotgun structure on the corner of St. Anne and Tonti streets in the Tremé area of New Orleans, it destroyed the home and restaurant that 90-year-old Willie Mae Seaton built as her life's work. With her family scattered across the South, and no insurance money with which to rebuild, the Scotch House faced extinction. When SFA committed to save the Scotch House in early 2006, assessors believed that the job could be completed with five dedicated volunteer weekends.

Like so many other restoration projects in New Orleans, however, it wasn't long before we learned that most of the building's damage predated Hurricane Katrina. Removal of sheetrock revealed lead paint and rotted timbers; termites had feasted for the past 50 years. The roof was no more than a single layer of shingles on top of older roof renditions, all rotted, and the cloth-covered wiring from a bygone era had to be replaced. Volunteers were numerous and enthusiastic, but construction expertise was slim and the budget slimmer. The job was much bigger than the professionals anticipated.

SFA members rallied when we issued the call to save the Scotch House. SFA founder John Egerton sold pickles all over the South to raise almost \$20,000. Members hosted parties and events. Friends from South Carolina drove 13 hours in a rental van to deliver kitchen equipment. John Currence, a native New Orleanian, volunteered to lead this project as foreman. Over one hundred SFA members and friends have traveled to New Orleans to scrape paint, jackhammer floors, and bleach away mold. Countless others have given to the Gulf Coast Renaissance Fund, where donations to date total over \$145,000.

Rebuilding the Scotch House has been an important project for the SFA. Some have questioned why this one restaurant merits so much attention when the whole city needs rebuilding. The answer is complex. Rebuilding has to start somewhere, and this project is at the heart of our mission. The work has been good for us and has reaffirmed the SFA's identity as a family that recognizes the significance of sharing at table. Saving the Scotch House is a way to honor the small independent restaurant community that birthed New Orleans cuisine, and our neighborhood service is a faith statement that the residents of Tremé will rebuild.

Today, after almost a year of work and months of gutting and cleaning, we've begun to put things back together. The project is near completion. Ms. Seaton's home will be finished first, and she will live there while work is completed at her restaurant. By April, we hope that you'll again be able to order a plate of fried chicken on the corner of St. Anne and Tonti.

Though work is reaching an end, the project's final invoices still require funds. Tax-deductible donations to the Gulf Coast Renaissance Fund are encouraged. To donate, mail a check (payable to GCRF) to the SFA, P.O. Box 1848, The University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677. The University of Mississippi Foundation receipts all gifts.



MARY BETH LASSETER

Camp Shoals

Come April, SFA stakes its camp tent in the "quad cities" of Northwest Alabama. Muscle Shoals, Florence, Sheffield, and Tuscumbia make up the quartet of towns, all within 10 driving minutes from each other. Fashion designer Natalie Chanin first piqued our interest when she launched a springtime collection using real people as models, cooking in their kitchens, using their own recipes, but wearing her couture. Natalie Chanin, the talent behind Project Alabama, and the brand new Alabama Chanin line, loves "crafts of the hand." And while sewing and quilting is what she heralds in her work, she happens to bake delicious biscuits too. The parallels between what Natalie celebrates in stitching and what the SFA celebrates in food are strong, and when the two found out about each other, a plan was born.

A tribe of Natalie's friends and colleagues—photographers, sculptors, musicians, and another great Southern fashion designer, Billy Reid—began hosting an Alabama Adventure Weekend in the spring of each year. It is a way to turn locals on to the art that is being produced in the area, and a way to draw outlanders in to see what is going on there. Each year the event grows, and for 2007, these kind Shoals folk have invited the SFA to plan a Day Camp around their event.

In addition to cultural and culinary exploration of the area, chefs Frank Stitt and Scott Peacock—both natives of Alabama—will work with local cooks to create a feast for us. And Joe York will shoot and then screen a short film on the area. We will study and celebrate charity chicken stew, rabbit ranches, watercross patches, the Muscle Shoals sound, and where folk culture meets high fashion. Mark your calendars for Camp Muscle Shoals, April 20–21.

ANGIE MOSIER

Recycling Oyster Shells: The South Carolina Story

With the closing of most of its oyster canneries and shucking houses over the last two decades, you'd think South Carolina would be swimming in oysters—or, at the very least, there would be a lot of oysters swimming in South Carolina. And you'd be right. Harvest levels are more or less the same as they have been for 20 years.

However, as a result of these closings, and with the growing popularity of oyster roasts and bulk sales to restaurants, the state is experiencing an ever-burgeoning shortage of shucked shells, which are used by oystermen and conservationists to restock and cultivate both new and existing oyster beds.

So where are these shucked shells going? Some go into driveways and flower gardens. A few are used for decorative purposes. Some go into traditional medicines, others into the making of lime. Most, however, go straight into the trash.

To combat this shortage, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources recently started an Oyster Recycling and Restoration Program. They even named an oyster habitat and recycling coordinator, Andy Jennings. Call him the Oysters-Rocky Feller.

Jennings recently explained the process to Myrtle Beach's *Sun News*.

"When the oysters spawn, the spat (oyster larvae) is looking for a place to settle down and start building its own shell," Jennings said. "Oyster shell is the best material [for the spat to attach to] for several reasons.

"[The oyster shell is] already out there so we're not changing the marsh ecosystem. We're putting something out there that is natural—it's a natural substrate for them."

Replenishing the oyster beds with cultch (material for spat attachment) also enhances the natural habitat in estuaries for numerous other species such as shrimp and crabs.

Moreover, it helps support the state's local fishermen and restaurateurs, something that, unlike eating oysters, is in good taste all year long.

Put another way, it's always an "R month"—for recycling.

The SCDNR has established 16 recycling locations along the state's coast to help in the collection of the shells. See a list at www.saltwaterfishing.sc.gov/oyster.html.

TIMOTHY C. DAVIS

SFA Contributors

TIMOTHY C. DAVIS is a Charlotte, North Carolina, native currently living in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. An MFA student at Queens University, he has written for magazines including *Saveur*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and *Mother Jones*.

MARCIE COHEN FERRIS, 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.

MARY BETH LASSETER, assistant director of the Southern Foodways Alliance, earned an M.A. in Southern Studies and an M.B.A. from the University of Mississippi.

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



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Book Notes

Thomas Jefferson on Wine.

By John R. Hailman. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2006. 480 pages, 24 color and 24 black-and-white images. \$38.00 cloth.

"No nation is drunken where wine is cheap; and none sober, where the dearness of wine substitutes ardent spirits as the common beverage."

—Thomas Jefferson

You can learn a lot about a man by his comforts, the things he insulates himself with as regards the world at large. For Thomas Jefferson this insulation, both literal and figurative, took the form of food and, moreover, drink, specifically, fine wine.

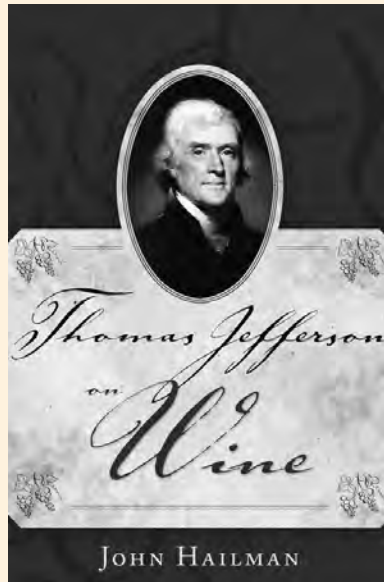
Jefferson was a man of means. He could afford a little more insulation than most. In his introduction, author John Hailman relates an anecdote from Isaac Jefferson, a former slave and trusted Jefferson confidante, who says Jefferson never had less than eight covers, or dishes, at dinner, "even if nobody at table but himself." If guests were present, this number could easily reach as high as 32, all with appropriate wines to accompany them.

Jefferson was more than just a gourmand of means. When flush, he increased his purchasing and cultivated his connoisseurship, became something of the Robert Parker of his age (albeit with more of a populist tilt; Jefferson delighted in bargains until his death). In the process, he helped shape America's (and some of Europe's) taste in wines.

Hailman, like Jefferson, has been known to split his time between the South and France (Oxford, Mississippi, and Méridnac, for Hailman), is a wine judge, a former wine columnist for the *Washington Post*, and a one-time syndicated wine writer. His experience in newspaper journalism serves him well here; the book, more or less a collage of historical musings based on Jefferson's own writings and the reminiscences of other contemporaries, takes the form of a lovingly annotated timeline, allowing both the wine aficionado and the history devotee equally sublime pleasures.

Fine wine, the old nugget goes, only gets better with age. Who knew the same could be true of wine writing?

TIMOTHY C. DAVIS



Southern Cooking.

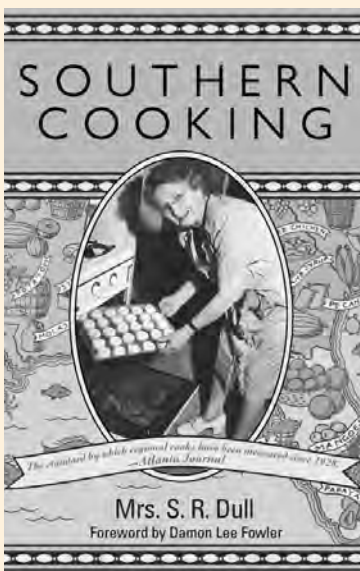
By Mrs. R. S. Dull. Foreword by Damon Lee Fowler. Athens: University Press of Georgia, 2006. 456 pages. \$24.95 cloth.

The life of Mrs. Henrietta Stanley Dull (1863–1964) spanned the years from the Civil War to the civil rights movement. Forced into employment by the failing health of her husband, Mrs. Dull for 25 years wrote an enormously popular and influential cooking column for the *Atlanta Journal*. She first collected her recipes into a cookbook in 1928 and enlarged the book for a new edition in 1941. That latter edition is reproduced in this reissue by the University Press of Georgia.

The result is an enormous collection of recipes—more than

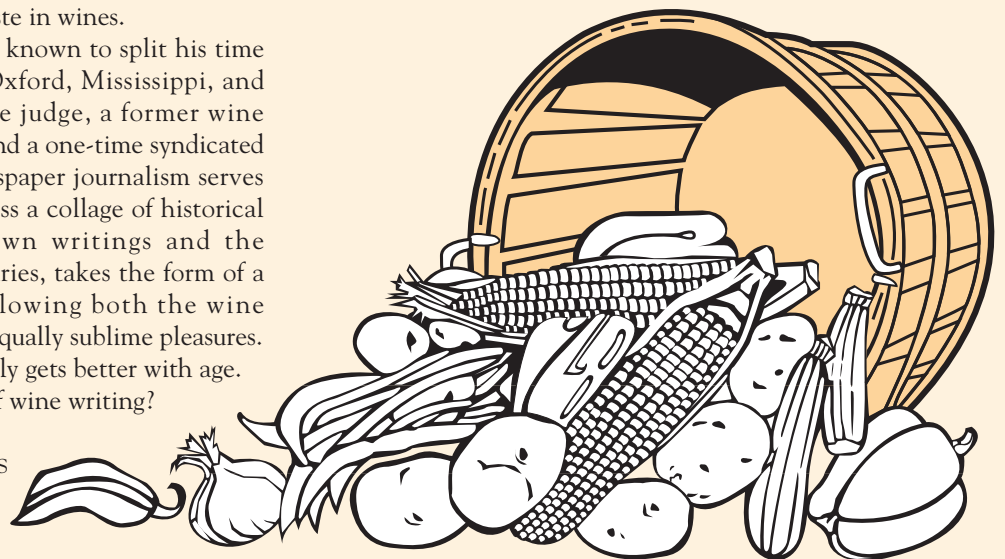
1,300—that chronicle Southern culture and cookery, offering "a rare, critical link," Damon Lee Fowler points out in his introduction, "in the transition from the nineteenth century to the modern world."

Mrs. Dull's writing style is forthright and authoritative. "With Mrs. Dull, more so than with any of the other classic Southern cookbook authors, I always had this absolute confidence that every recipe would work, a sense that she was



intimate with them, that she wrote from experience," says Atlanta chef Scott Peacock. We should be grateful to the University Press of Georgia for making this classic of Southern cooking once again easily available.

THOMAS HEAD



NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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

Odie Lindsey is a second-year Southern Studies graduate student. He moved to Oxford from Chicago, where he earned an M.F.A. in Writing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

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.

Donald M. Kartiganer holds the William Howry Chair in Faulkner Studies at the University of Mississippi and is director of the Faulkner Conference. He is the author of *The Fragile Thread: The Meaning of Form in Faulkner's Novels* and is near completion of a book-length study, "Repetition Forward: A Theory of Modernist Reading."

Sally Cassidy Lyon is a Gulfport native and Sewanee graduate. She lives in Oxford with her husband, Dalton, an orange tabby cat, Patty MacTavish, and a new puppy, Scout. She works at the Center, as the Director Charles Reagan Wilson's assistant.

Jonathan Miles is a columnist for the *New York Times*, a regular contributor to the *New York Times Book Review*, and a contributing editor to *Men's Journal*, where he has overseen books coverage since 2001. During his years living in Oxford, from the late '80s to 2001, he developed a close friendship with Larry Brown, and he currently serves as an advisor to Brown's literary estate. He lives in New York.

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.

Edwin Smith is a communications specialist in the Office of Media and Public Relations at the University of Mississippi. He received a B.A. (1980) and an M.A. (1993) in print journalism from the University.

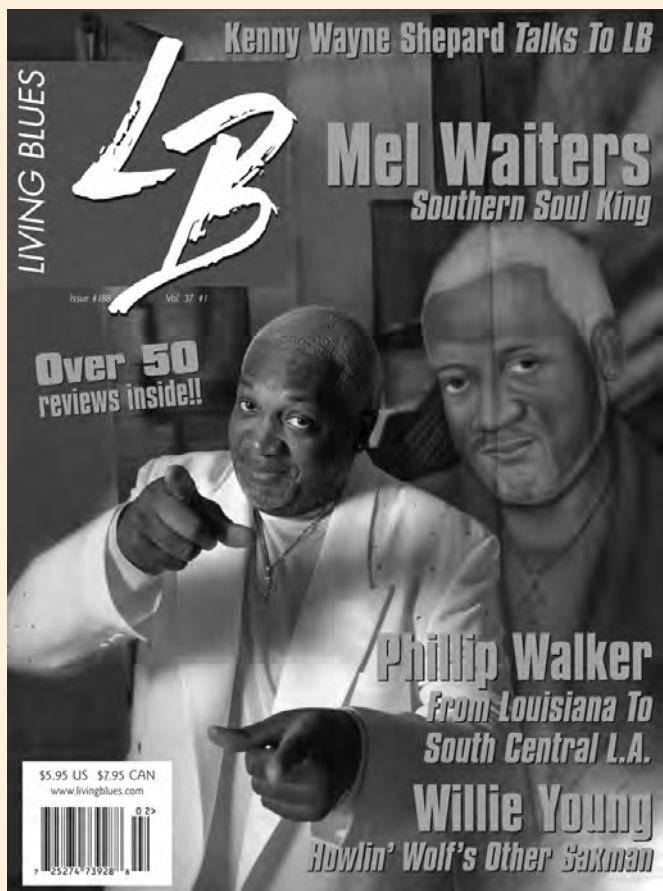
David Wharton is assistant professor and director of documentary projects at the Center, where he teaches courses in Southern Studies, fieldwork, and photography. He is the author of *The Soul of a Small Texas Town: Photographs, Memories, and History from McDade*.

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*.

Pictured in front of Barnard Observatory is Odie Lindsey, a second-year Southern Studies master's student, holding his award in recognition of his participation as the 2006 Dr. Ted Lefebber Audubon Oral History Intern. Odie, along with Documentary Studies and Southern Studies professor David Wharton, indexed, cross-referenced, and ultimately digitized the Mississippi Oral History Project. The internship is funded by the Lefebber Company in Chicago and coordinated by the Strawberry Plains Audubon Center in Holly Springs, Mississippi. The internship is named for Dr. Ted Lefebber, a Chicago veterinarian and pioneer in pet bird medicine. Past Southern Studies students involved with the program include Alison Traffanstedt and Rob Hawkins.



Philip K. Ennsley



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Southern Culture Catalog

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

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



Photo Courtesy: Memphis Commercial Appeal

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

"Are You Walkin' with Me?" Sister Thea Bowman, William Faulkner, and African American Culture

Overview of programs Sister Thea presented at the annual Faulkner Conference from 1980 through 1989. Produced by Lisa N. Howorth,



Center for the Study of Southern Culture, 1990.

Color, 30 minutes.

DVD 1016 \$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

The Eleventh Oxford Conference for the Book Poster (2001)

Poster features Richard Wright photograph by Carl Van Vetchen.

M9903 \$10.00

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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

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

Friends \$13.50

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

Friends \$22.50

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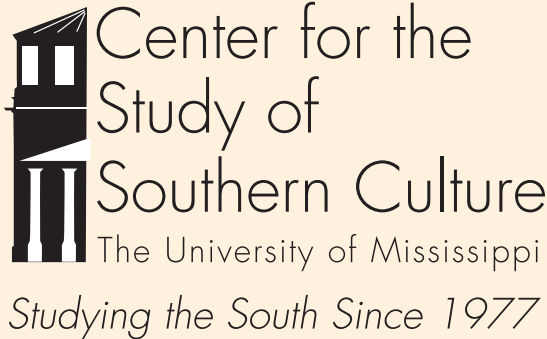
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