



Shelby Foote. Portrait by Baxter Knowlton

The Thirteenth
Oxford Conference for the Book
The University of Mississippi • Oxford, Mississippi
March 30 - April 1, 2006



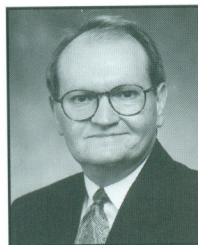
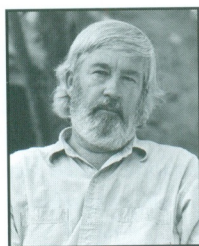
NATASHA TRETHEWEY for her first book of poems, *Domestic Work*, was selected by Rita Dove for the 1999 Cave Canem Poetry Prize for the best first book by an African American poet. The book also received the 2001 Lillian Smith Book Award and the 2001 Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Award. Her second volume, *Bellocq's Ophelia*, was a finalist for the Academy of American Poets' James Laughlin Prize. Her third book, *Native Guard*, will be published by Houghton Mifflin in March 2006. A native of Gulfport, Mississippi, Trethewey now lives in Decatur, Georgia, and teaches creative writing at Emory University. For 2005–2006 she is the Lehman Brady Joint Chair Professor in Documentary Studies and American Studies at Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

DARLENE HARBOUR UNRUE is the author of *Katherine Anne Porter: The Life of an Artist*, *Understanding Katherine Anne Porter*, and *Truth and Vision in Katherine Anne Porter's Fiction*. She is a professor of English at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas.



OLYMPIA VERNON is the author of two critically acclaimed novels. Her first novel, *Eden*, was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction and won the 2004 Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Foundation Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Her second novel, *Logic*, was nominated for the 2005 Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Award. Her third novel, *A Killing in This Town*, concerns the story of a young boy who must, upon his coming of age, lynch a black man in order to be initiated into the KKK. Vernon is the winner of the 2005 Governor's Award in the Professional Artist category for the state of Louisiana.

CURTIS WILKIE was a reporter for the *Clarksdale Press Register* in his home state of Mississippi during the 1960s and then served as a national and foreign correspondent for the *Boston Globe* for 26 years. He is coauthor, with Jim McDougal, of *Arkansas Mischief: The Birth of a National Scandal* and author of *Dixie: A Personal Odyssey through Events that Shaped the Modern South*. Wilkie holds the Kelly Gene Cook Chair of Journalism at the University of Mississippi. In 2005 he received a special award for excellence in nonfiction from the Fellowship of Southern Writers.



CHARLES REAGAN WILSON is the author of *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865–1920*, editor of *Religion in the South*, coeditor of the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, and editor of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*. His other publications include a collection of essays titled *Judgment and Grace in Dixie: Southern Faiths from Faulkner to Elvis*. He is director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture and professor of history and Southern Studies at the University of Mississippi.

ETHEL YOUNG-MINOR is an assistant professor of English and African American Studies at the University of Mississippi. She is coeditor of *Black Sermons*, a collection of African American sermons delivered from 1901 to 2000, and has published articles in the *College Language Association Journal* and *Women Studies International*. Her current research focuses on African American women in performance.



Mississippi Reads

Sponsors of the Oxford Conference for the Book invite individuals, institutions, and organizations throughout the state to join as participants and partners in Mississippi Reads. The project invites readers—beginning and advanced, of all ages—to read a designated book by a Mississippi author. Libraries, schools, and groups are encouraged to sponsor discussions, lectures, and other activities focusing on the book.

The first book for Mississippi Reads is William Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*. To help get the project organized and going strong throughout the state, *Go Down, Moses* will be the book for 2006–2007. Thereafter, Mississippi Reads will consider one book a year.

Richard Wright's *Uncle Tom's Children* is the book for 2008, when the Wright centennial will be celebrated. (He was born on a plantation near Natchez on September 4, 1908.)

Eudora Welty's *Collected Stories* is the book for 2009, which is the year for celebrating her centennial. (She was born in Jackson on April 13, 1909.)

For details, e-mail the Center for the Study of Southern Culture (cssc@olemiss.edu).

(continued from page 2)

Foote's biographer, C. Stuart Chapman, remarked that "Foote had used his Civil War to escape the civil rights era."

. . . it doesn't much matter if facts come out of documents or out of your head, they are still things you work with and respect. You are looking for the truth, and . . . it's not a different truth, it's the same truth.

—Shelby Foote

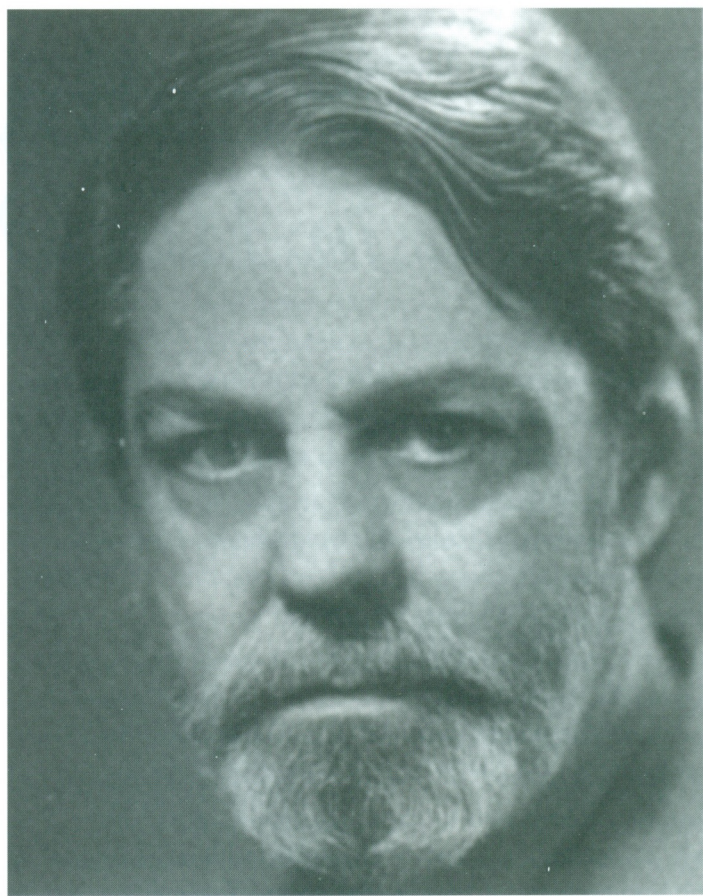
Invited by Willie Morris to speak at Ole Miss in the mid-1980s, Foote talked informally on campus in the comfortable Mississippi Room at the John Davis Williams Library. In a question-and-answer session he was asked if he preferred writing novels to history, or vice versa, and responded that he had no preference, that the point in literature was to tell the truth, and whether one wrote histories of the Civil War or novels made no difference. "Literature," he said, "is a simple matter of telling the truth or lying." (For years, I considered rearranging the categories in Square Books in just that way—truth on one side, lies on the other.)

Everyone knows television gave Foote the fame he truly had deserved. In Ken Burns's episodic 1990 PBS documentary of the Civil War, Foote's extraordinarily vast knowledge of the dramatic details of "the Waw-wuh," as well as the handsome face, mellifluous voice, and eyes that alternately twinkled and gazed dead-serious, charmed a nation of viewers. Sales of his books skyrocketed, speaking requests came in by the score, and fan mail—including marriage proposals—piled up. Renewed critical acclaim came, too: the American Academy of Arts and Letters issued Foote membership in 1994, and, in 1999, a Modern Library listing of the 100 most important nonfiction books of all time placed *The Civil War* at number fifteen.

As a young man Shelby Foote was married twice, and a third time to his widow, Gwyn Rainer Foote, in 1956. He had two children, Margaret and Huger Foote, and the family lived together in Memphis in a house on Parkway.

For years Shelby met every month with a half-dozen friends, including Bill Pearson, Billy Reed, and Michael McDonnell, in a reading group. I enjoyed attending this meeting on a couple of occasions. Once we met upstairs at the Wolf River Society in downtown Memphis. I was accompanied by Larry Brown, who had recently devoured *The Civil War*. He was astonished by it and spoke of it for years. Our assigned reading for that particular meeting was *The Moviegoer*, by Walker Percy, and it was the third time in the group's three-decade existence the book had been scheduled for discussion, though our meeting consisted almost entirely of Shelby's tales of times with Walker.

On another occasion we met at a Midtown restaurant, this time with Barry Hannah and Greg Schirmer, the great literature professor here at Ole Miss. We were to read for the meeting three John O'Hara stories that Shelby had selected, and the dis-



WILLIAM SPEER

cussion became lively when Barry began to weaken Shelby's claim that O'Hara was "perhaps the greatest writer of the late 20th century." After a mildly feisty reassertion from Mr. Foote, he gently moved the discussion to Proust, the writer he said he had read and reread throughout his life.

A writer is a skilled craftsman who discovers things along with the reader, and what you do with a good writer is you share the search; you are not being imparted wisdom, or if you are being imparted wisdom, it's a wisdom that came to him just as it came to you reading it.

—Shelby Foote

Note: The information for this book report came from *Shelby Foote: A Writer's Life*, by C. Stuart Chapman; an August 16, 1979, interview with John Griffin Jones, *Mississippi Writers Talking*; an article by Linton Weeks published shortly after Foote's death in the *Washington Post*, "Shelby Foote: Giving Voice to a Land of Great Stories," June 29, 2005; and *The Correspondence of Shelby Foote and Walker Percy*, edited by Jay Tolson, Norton, 1996.

Richard Howorth

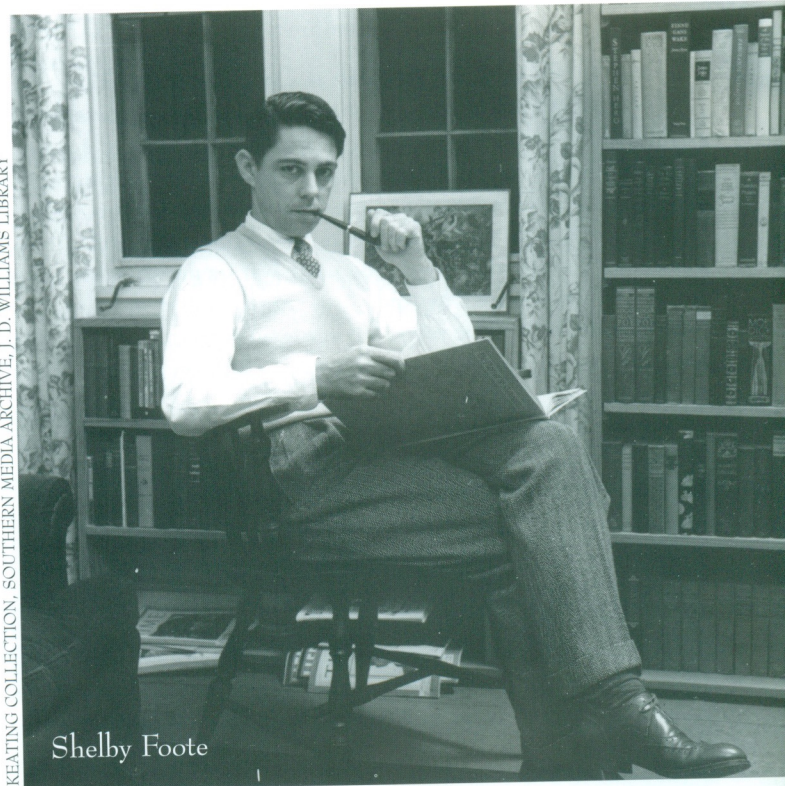
Shelby Foote

in His Own Words

I had left Chapel Hill at the end of my sophomore year, not because I didn't like it (I did, a lot: especially those nine stories of stacks at the back of the library, where I prowled in disguise as a precocious graduate student) but because my first extended absence from my homeland made me want to know it better, year-round. . . . In that time (two years at home) I worked at various jobs, including one as a carpenter's helper in the construction of the Greenville Bridge, which required me to carry lumber from piling to piling along catwalks ninety feet above the chocolate surface of the Mississippi; the pay, I remember, was just over thirty cents an hour, six days a week. I had written stories for the *Carolina Magazine*, seldom missing a monthly issue, and I continued writing through this day-labor period as well, only this time it wasn't stories. It was a novel I called *Tournament*.

. . . I sent it off to Alfred A. Knopf in faraway New York, in part because my fellow townsman William Alexander Percy's *Lanterns on the Levee* was in the works there, but mainly I think because Knopf turned out the best-looking books in America. I always liked well-printed well-bound books, and I wanted mine to have all the advantages I felt sure that it deserved.

My bedrock intention, or hope, was to understand my homeland by studying these composite individuals who had lived in it before me. . . . Looking back on the attempt, with the perspective of the years—some two million hard-bound words later—I can see now that . . . I was quite consciously trying to cover and comprehend this patch of earth called Jordan County, which I discovered and developed by basing it on Washington County, Mississippi, where I was born and raised. —“Preface” (1987), *Tournament*




KEATING COLLECTION, SOUTHERN MEDIA ARCHIVE, J. D. WILLIAMS LIBRARY

Shelby Foote


Thus he began the fulfillment of a dream that had come to him the previous month. It was May then, the oaks tasselings. He and the two trappers had reached the lake at the close of day. While the sun sank big and red across the water, they made camp on a grassy strip between the lake and the forest. Isaac lay rolled in his blanket, and all that night, surrounded by lake country beauty—overhead the far spangled reaches of sky, eastward the forest murmurs, the whispering leaves and groaning limbs, the hoarse night-noises of animals, and westward, close at hand, the slow lapping of water—he dreamed. —*Tournament* (1949)

Love has failed us. We are essentially, irrevocably alone. Anything that seems to combat that loneliness is a trap—Love is a trap. Love has failed us in this century. . . . Now


who has the answer? The Russians? The Catholic Church? Or are we building up to Armageddon, the day they drop the Bomb? God smiles and waits, like a man crouched over an ant-hill with a bottle of insecticide uncorked. —*Follow Me Down* (1950)




Fitzgerald once said that all really good writing is like swimming underwater, holding the breath. It's true. But it should be rapid and strong; otherwise it's apt to prove weak and jerky—as I'm afraid this is. Fortunately I have a plot that will bear a lot of lumber—I think.... If Mary Pratt ever looks like she wants to be a writer, hit her on the head with something heavy. —Letter to Walker Percy, 17 October 1950



I inclose the opening five pages of my history, to show you something of the method. . . . I have never enjoyed writing so much as I do this writing. It goes dreadfully slow; sometimes I feel like I'm trying to bail out the Mississippi with a teacup; but I like it, I like it. —Letter to Walker Percy, 8 August 1956




I feel death all in the air in Memphis, and I'm beginning to hate the one thing I really ever loved—the South. No, that's wrong: not hate—despise. Mostly I despise the leaders, the pussy-faced politicians, soft-talking instruments of real evil; killers of the dream, that woman called them, and she's right. Good Lord, when I think what we could have been, the heritage we perverted! . . . —Letter to Walker Percy, 13 August 1963




Our trouble, it seems to me, is we live by (or claim to live by) a batch of myths that never were true to start with. A nation of halfmad teenagers from the outset. The Civil War is a bloody mess from start to finish, unredeemable even by Lee or

Lincoln, and all the “glory” aura isn't worth the death of a single soldier. —Letter to Walker Percy, 5 August 1970



I really think that the Nobel speech is—I'll try not to use ugly words—a misrepresentation of Faulkner's art. I feel that strongly. I do not admire the speech except as a noble statement by a man. . . . I like the Faulkner who believes you are going to get the blackjack in the end. I believe the dark diceman is waiting there and he's going to cut you down. I like the Faulkner of *Light in August*, and he is not characterized by the Nobel Prize speech. It seems to me to underrate the thing he did best and to overrate the thing that caused whatever flaws there are in his later work. —Interview with Evans Harrington, 1976



A Federal colonel noted that the Confederates “behaved with more courtesy than cordiality,” and it was true. “Affiliation was out of the question; we were content with civility,” one explained. Union troops, on the other hand, were friendly and outgoing; “in fact almost oppressively so,” a butternut declared. “We've been fighting one another for four years. Give me a Confederate five-dollar bill to remember you by,” a bluecoat said, and his hearers found nothing offensive in his manner. Sometimes, though, a discordant note would be struck and would bring on a fiery answer—as when a Federal major, seeking a souvenir to take home, asked a Confederate staff captain for the white towel he had carried as a flag of truce on Sunday. “I'll see you in hell first!” the angered staffer replied. “It is humiliating enough to have had to carry it and exhibit it; I'm not going to let you preserve it as a monument of our defeat.” Similarly, when a visiting sergeant tried to open a friendly discussion by remarking: “Well, Johnny, I guess you fellows will go home now to stay,” he found that he had touched a nerve. The rebel was in no mood to be gloated over. “You guess, do you?” he said hotly. “Maybe we are. But don't be giving us any of your impudence. If you do, we'll come back and lick you again.” —*The Civil War*, volume 3 (1974)

Save the Dates

Tamale Trail Tour • April 22, 2006

Head to the Mississippi Delta, which has been called "the most Southern place on earth" for its unique history, music, culture, and, yes, its food. The Tamale Trail Tour will treat guests to the best Delta hot tamales in Clarksdale, Cleveland, and Rosedale. We'll visit with a handful of vendors in each locale. We will talk about the history of hot tamales in the area, get some lessons in making hot tamales, and, of course, eat some hot tamales. Amy Evans, mapper of the tamale trail, will be our guide. Registration cost is \$75 per person. The fee includes bus transportation, presentations and, of course, tamales. To register, visit www.outreach.olemiss.edu/tamale_trail/.

Southern Gardens Symposium • May 5-6, 2006

The second annual Southern Gardens Symposium welcomes esteemed writer, lecturer, and garden consultant Tara Dillard to campus. Events include a campus garden tour led by Jeff McManus and a presentation by Jack Brown at the Oxford Garden Center. Saturday includes a field trip to the water garden at Walter Place Estates and an afternoon program at Strawberry Plains, Mississippi Audubon Center. Registration includes guided garden tours, admission to presentations, and lunch on Saturday. The fee for the symposium is \$85; no refunds will be given after April 21. For more information or to register, visit www.outreach.olemiss.edu/gardening/.

UM Conference on the Civil War

Understanding the African American Civil War Experience May 19-21, 2006

The UM Conference on the Civil War concentrates this year on African American life related to the Civil War, particularly the experiences of black men and women in both military and domestic spheres, North and South, whether free, enslaved, or fugitive, and both during the war and the aftermath of war. The conference will also feature a tour highlighting the University's association with the Civil War and local 19th-century African American history, as well as a visit to the Civil War Interpretive Center in Corinth, Mississippi, which emphasizes the significance of that city's freed black community during the war. For more information or to register, visit www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/civil_war/.

Music of the South Conference • June 2-3, 2006

The second annual Music of the South conference focuses on a wide range of music that is rooted in the American South, either having origins in the region or making use of regional themes and context. Country, bluegrass, blues, gospel, jazz, rock 'n' roll, rap/hip-hop, and art music that came out of the South will all be covered in lectures, workshops, and musical performances. Participants will explore the connections among particular genres and understand the refined context that has produced such musical creativity. Registration includes admission to lectures and panel discussions, as well as tickets to ancillary music events. For more information, visit www.outreach.olemiss.edu/music_south/.

Yoknapatawpha Summer Writers' Workshop • June 16-18, 2006

The creative writing workshop in fiction and poetry features workshops and lectures on craft, panel discussions, book signings, and readings, as well as Southern catfish at its finest. Faculty include writers Tom Franklin, Beth Ann Fennelly, and David Galef, and storyteller Rebecca Jernigan. Registration is open to anyone interested in writing. Preregistration is required. Tuition is \$295 per person. After May 1,

the tuition is \$325. The fee includes workshops, lectures, panel discussions, readings, and one evening reception. The registration deadline is Friday, June 2, 2006. For more information or to register, visit www.outreach.olemiss.edu/summer/yokna_writers/.

Southern Writers, Southern Writing Graduate Student Conference • July 20-22, 2006

The 12th annual program of 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 33rd annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference at a reduced fee. For more information, visit www.olemiss.edu/conf/swsw or www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner or write to Southern Writers, Southern Writing, Department of English, C128 Bondurant, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677-1848.

Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference • July 23-27, 2006

The 2006 Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference will examine the topic "Global Faulkner" through five days of lectures and discussions by literary scholars and critics. In addition to paper presentations by noted scholars, program events include discussions by Faulkner friends and family, sessions on teaching Faulkner, an exhibition of Faulkner books, manuscripts, photographs, and memorabilia at the University's John Davis Williams Library, "Faulkner on the Fringe"—an "open-mike" evening at the Southside Gallery, guided daylong tours of northeast Mississippi, and a picnic served at Faulkner's home, Rowan Oak. For more information, visit www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner/.

Southern Foodways Field Trip and Symposium (with Delta Divertissement)

May 19-21 and October 19-22

(Delta Divertissement, October 18-19)

This year's May field trip is a seafood-fueled excursion to Apalachicola and environs. The ninth annual fall symposium showcases the Gulf South as a theme and, as in past years, includes lectures, film screenings, concerts, and meals. The event draws cookbook authors, anthropologists, culinary historians, home cooks, organic gardeners, food journalists, and inquisitive eaters of all races and from all parts of the country, and all with a strong desire to nurture and celebrate the food-centered customs of the South. An overnight trip to Greenwood, home of Viking Range Corporation, is set to precede symposium. For more information as it becomes available, including registrations fees, visit www.southernfoodways.com.

Delta Literary Tour • March 19-21, 2007

www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/

14th Oxford Conference for the Book • March 22-24, 2007

Dedicated to Larry Brown

www.olemiss.edu/depts/south/

For further information or questions about any events, call Mary Beth Lasseter at 662-915-5993 or e-mail her at marybeth@olemiss.edu.

THE CITY OF OXFORD, originally part of the Chickasaw Cession, was incorporated by Legislative Act in 1837. The town was captured during the Civil War by Union troops, and most of its buildings were burned to the ground, although many historic structures remain. Oxford has always been known for its close relationship with the University of Mississippi, whose approximately 14,000 students make it roughly the same size as the town. Many people visit Oxford each year to see the University, Rowan Oak, and other classic Southern architecture, including the Lafayette County Courthouse, Isom Place, built in 1838, and homes on the streets surrounding the town square. Visitors and residents alike appreciate the close and gentle beauty of the Lafayette County countryside, which includes Sardis Lake, Holly Springs National Forest, and such buildings as College Hill Church, where William and Estelle Faulkner were married in 1929. *USA Today* named Oxford as one of the top six college towns in the United States, and many local citizens are now worried that recent growth and development are threatening its historic small-town charm.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI, affectionately known as Ole Miss, is the state's oldest public institution of higher learning and has been a recognized leader in teaching, research, and public service since opening in 1848. In November of that year a faculty of four offered liberal arts instruction to 80 students. From those beginnings, the student body has increased to its current enrollment of over 14,000 on the main Oxford campus. The campus itself has expanded from 640 acres in 1848 to more than 2,500 acres. The academic division of the Oxford campus is composed of the College of Liberal Arts (1848), School of Law, which is the fourth oldest state-supported law school in the nation (1854), School of Engineering (1900), School of Education (1903), School of Pharmacy (1908), School of Business Administration (1917), Graduate School (1927), School of Accountancy (1978), and School of Applied Sciences (2001). The Schools of Medicine (1903), Nursing (1958), Health Related Professions (1972), and Dentistry (1973) are located at the Jackson campus. In all, the University offers more than 100 programs of study. The University produced its 24th Rhodes Scholar in 1998 and since then has produced three Truman Scholars, five Goldwater Scholars, a Marshall Scholar, and three Fulbright Scholars.

THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOUTHERN CULTURE was established at the University of Mississippi in 1977. Since then, the Center has gained an international reputation for innovative education and scholarship on the American South. The Center administers BA and MA programs in Southern Studies, sponsors research and documentary projects on all aspects of Southern culture, and encourages public understanding of the South through publications, media productions, lectures, performances, and exhibitions. Among the programs the Center sponsors or cosponsors are the Oxford Conference for the Book in the spring, the Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference in the summer, and a history symposium and the Southern Foodways Symposium in October. Open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., except for University holidays. Telephone: 662-915-5993.

ROWAN OAK, William Faulkner's home, was built by Colonel Sheegog in 1844 and bought by Faulkner in 1930. This plantation-style house was his home until his death in 1962. Open 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1:00–4:00 p.m. Sunday. Closed on Mondays. Telephone: 662-234-3284.

UNIVERSITY MUSEUM: The Mary Buie Museum (1939) and the adjoining Kate Skipwith Teaching Museum (1976) house collections representing the fields of archaeology, art, anthropology, decorative arts, history, science, and technology. Particularly outstanding are the David M. Robinson Collection of Greek and Roman antiquities, the Millington-Barnard Collection of 19th-century scientific instruments, and the Southern Folk Art Collection, centered on the paintings of Oxford artist Theora Hamblett. Hours are 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1:00–4:30 p.m. Sunday. Closed Mondays and on University holidays. Telephone: 662-915-7073.

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS/UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY: Over 500 manuscript collections and over 30,000 volumes of Mississippiana are housed here. Among its permanent exhibits are William Faulkner's Nobel Prize and signed first editions and manuscripts. The Seymour Lawrence Room, a gift of the late publisher, contains signed first editions, manuscripts, photographs, correspondence, and memorabilia of the dozens of authors he published, including J. P. Donleavy, Barry Hannah, Jim Harrison, and Jayne Anne Phillips. The Southern Media Archive and Visual Collections contain the images of generations of Mississippians and include the collections of photographers Martin Dain and J. R. Cofield. A recent addition to Special Collections, the Blues Archive houses the *Living Blues* Archival Collection and over 50,000 sound recordings and personal collections of blues artists such as B. B. King. During the 2006 Oxford Conference for the Book, Archives and Special Collections will be featuring an exhibition devoted to the life and work of Shelby Foote. Other exhibitions include *Mississippi Matinée: An Exhibition of the State and the Silver Screen*. Open 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except for University holidays. Telephone: 662-915-7408.

THE LAFAYETTE COUNTRY LITERACY COUNCIL is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote literacy and adult education throughout the county by means of adult one-on-one tutoring, family literacy programs, and working with partner agencies. Services are free of charge. The Council depends on community support for volunteers and financial contributions. Telephone: 662-234-4234.

YOUNG AUTHORS FAIR: T. A. Barron and Sharon M. Draper are participating in the 2006 Young Authors Fair sponsored by the Junior Auxiliary of Oxford, the Lafayette County Literary Council, and other collaborators. In preparation for the fair, every fifth grader in the county read Barron's *The Ancient One* and was asked to write, illustrate, and bind a book to be displayed at the Lafayette County-Oxford Library. All fifth graders were invited to attend the Barron program at the Ford Center for the Performing Arts during the Oxford Conference for the Book. The fair was expanded this year to include a session for ninth graders with Sharon Draper. Just as all fifth graders received their very own copy of *The Ancient One*, all ninth-grade students received a copy of one Draper's books (*Battle of Jericho* or *Copper Sun*) and read and wrote about it before attending her session at the Ford Center during the book conference. Students are also meeting the visiting authors at the Lafayette County Library after school on Thursday, March 30, and during a book signing at Square Books Jr. 3:30–4:30 p.m. on Friday, March 31.

The Thirteenth Oxford Conference for the Book

The University of Mississippi • Oxford, Mississippi

Dedicated to Shelby Foote

Sponsored by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, Department of English, Department of History, Department of Journalism, John Davis Williams Library, Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College, John and Renée Grisham Visiting Writers Fund, Barksdale Reading Institute, Sarah Isom Center for Women, School of Education, Junior Auxiliary of Oxford, Lafayette County-Oxford Public Library, Lafayette County Literacy Council, Oxford Middle School PTA, Mississippi Library Commission, Mississippi Hills Heritage Area Alliance, and Square Books. The 2006 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, and the Yoknapatawpha Arts Council.



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.

MISSISSIPPI HUMANITIES COUNCIL

This program is financially assisted by the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council. MHC's purpose is to provide public programs in traditional liberal arts disciplines to serve nonprofit groups in Mississippi.

YOKNAPATAWPHA ARTS COUNCIL

The Yoknapatawpha Arts Council is a nonprofit organization established in 1975 to access, celebrate, and promote the arts with all citizens of Oxford and Lafayette County, Mississippi. The Yoknapatawpha Arts Council is the official arts agency for the City of Oxford and Lafayette County.

ELEVENTH ANNUAL NATIONAL POETRY MONTH APRIL 2006

A NATIONWIDE CELEBRATION OF POETRY

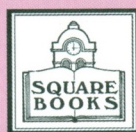
Inaugurated by the American Academy of Poets in April 1996, National Poetry Month brings together publishers, bookstores, libraries, schools, and literary organizations across the country to celebrate poetry and its vital place in American culture. For additional information, visit the Web site of the American Academy of Poets (www.poets.org) or inquire by telephone (212-274-0343) or e-mail (academy@poets.org).



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telephone 800-468-4001 • 662-236-2262
fax 662-234-9630

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 • fax 662-915-5814 • e-mail cssc@olemiss.edu

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University of Mississippi

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The Thirteenth Oxford Conference for the Book is dedicated to Shelby Foote (1916–2005)

in recognition of his contributions to American letters.

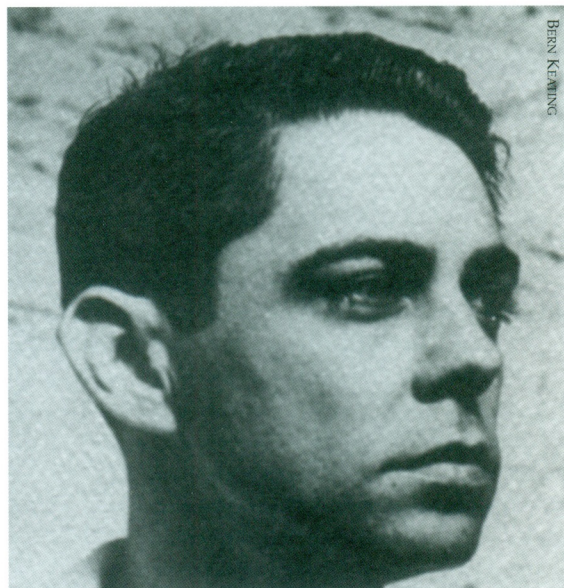
Those of you who attended the Book Conference last year may recall that it had been determined then that the 2006 Conference would honor Shelby Foote. We had hoped he might be here, but, as you know, he died after an illness on June 27, 2005. His passing was mourned around the world by all who knew him through his novels and, particularly, his monumental history, *The Civil War*, a work he was encouraged by Bennett Cerf of Random House to write as a “short history.” Cerf had in mind a 200,000-word book as one in a historical series that never got off the ground, and Foote quickly realized his work would be much longer. With the go-ahead from Random House, in 1954 he began writing the 1,655,000-word epic that later would compel American readers and critics to think of Foote as “our Gibbon.”

Born into a storied Southern family on November 17, 1916, and reared in Greenville, Mississippi, young Shelby became editor of the Greenville High School newspaper, *Pica*. Foote was an avid reader who was much influenced by Dickens’s *David Copperfield*, in which he “discovered there was a world . . . more real than the real world.” William Alexander Percy, the Greenville author whose intellectual sphere had been extended to many young Greenville writers, including Ellen Douglas, David Cohn, Hodding Carter, Craig Claiborne, and Will Percy’s nephew and adopted son, Walker, had encouraged Foote to read Joyce’s *Ulysses*, Mann’s *The Magic Mountain*, and Proust’s *Remembrance of Things Past*. Foote later remarked that during this period of reading “I was like a colt in clover with that stuff.”

Foote and Walker Percy formed a lasting friendship and literary brotherhood, a relationship illuminated in *The Correspondence of Shelby Foote and Walker Percy*. The two left Greenville in 1935 for Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina. With mediocre grades, Foote dropped out in 1937, feeling two years was sufficient for his college education. One might say he set aside being an honor student to become a student of honor.

I sometimes think that there’s never been a single page of very great writing that did not have humor in it. It may be dark humor, it may be sardonic, it may be this and that and the other, but there’s always humor in any good writing.

—Shelby Foote



While in Chapel Hill Shelby wrote several stories—stories whose characters and events would appear in his later novels—which were published in *Carolina Magazine*, and then he went back home to Greenville to write. In a famous literary encounter, and non-encounter, Shelby and Walker traveled together to Oxford to meet their literary hero, William Faulkner; Shelby talked to Faulkner for a couple of hours while Walker waited, timidly and deferentially, in the car.

Working at home for the newspaper in a fashion similar perhaps to Faulkner’s slipshod performance as postmaster, Foote completed *Tournament*, his first novel, and, after a cautious acceptance from Knopf, agreed to shelve it temporarily.

In 1940, feeling that “we should be in the war—to stop Hitler,” Foote enlisted in the Mississippi National Guard. Ultimately he would not regret “that five-year chunk that war took out of my life,” but a West Point graduate and superior officer who felt Foote had been insolent in a petty matter managed to get Foote court-martialed. The dismissal came on a technicality. While stationed in Ireland, Foote had traveled two miles beyond a permitted 50 mile perimeter, in order to see a woman in Belfast—in 1944, just prior to the invasion of Europe.

Shelby Foote had a bit of rascal in him. He is reported to have enjoyed in his youth what he called “helling around the Delta.” He had little respect for conformity or conventions, and was asked not to come back to his North Carolina fraternity after demonstrating what his “brothers” considered apathy, atheism, and poor humor. He liked women and whiskey both very well, though once complained in a letter to Walker that “the one is about as unsatisfactory as the other, except at the time.” His friend Hodding Carter III remarked shortly after Shelby’s death that “Shelby was one of the truly wildasses of the Delta. That’s hard to say because everybody from the Delta is a wildass.”

After the war he wrote in a fury, finally publishing *Tournament* in 1949; *Follow Me Down* in 1950; *Love in a Dry Season*, 1951; *Shiloh*, 1952; and *Jordan County*, 1954—all prior to *The Civil War*. These novels, and a later one, *September, September*, published in 1978, generally dealt with the events, characters, mores, injustices, and passions of the South he knew so well.

(continued on page 9)

The Thirteenth Oxford Conference for the Book

The University of Mississippi • Oxford, Mississippi

Program sessions will be at the Gertrude Castellow Ford Center for the Performing Arts.

Schedule of Events

THURSDAY, MARCH 30

- 10:00 a.m. Registration Begins
- 11:30 a.m. Exhibitions
Shelby Foote: His Life and Work
Mississippi Matinée: An Exhibition of the State and the Silver Screen
"Mississippi on Film"
Ward Emling
John Davis Williams Library
- Light Lunch Mississippi Hall of Writers
Hosted by Julia Rholes
Dean of University Libraries
- 1:30 p.m. Welcome
Richard Howorth, Mayor
Shelby Foote: His Work and Legacy
Charles Reagan Wilson, moderator
Ellen Douglas, Gary W. Gallagher
Film Clip with a Ken Burns tribute and Foote commentaries
- 3:00 p.m. Remembering Shelby Foote
Richard Howorth, moderator
Michael McDonnell, William Pearson, William Reed
- 5:30 p.m. *Thacker Mountain Radio*
Jim Dees, host
George Saunders and Lewis Nordan
The Yalobushwhackers, house band
Tim Lee band, visiting musicians
- 7:00 p.m. Dinner
Meet the Speakers
Isom Place
(Reservations Required)
- 9:00 p.m. Open Mike - Poetry & Fiction Jam
David Galef, moderator
Bouré

FRIDAY, MARCH 31

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome
Carolyn Ellis Staton, Provost
Literature for Young Readers 1
Rosemary Oliphant-Ingham, moderator
Readings/Remarks
T. A. Barron
- 10:30 a.m. Literature for Young Readers 2
Barbara Lowe, moderator
Readings/Remarks
Sharon M. Draper
- 11:30 a.m. The Endangered Species: Readers Today and Tomorrow
Elaine H. Scott, moderator
Claiborne Barksdale, Sarah Combs, Cindy Dach, Pamela Pridgen
- 1:30 p.m. Readings and Remarks
Jamie Kornegay, moderator
Tad Floridis, Starling Lawrence, James Meek
- 2:30 p.m. Readings and Remarks
Ethel Young-Minor, moderator
Brian Keith Jackson, Tyehimba Jess, Olympia Vernon
- 3:30 p.m. Readings and Remarks
David Galef, moderator
Jack Pendarvis, George Saunders
- 4:30 p.m. Poetry: Readings and Remarks
Celebration of National Poetry Month
Beth Ann Fennelly, moderator
Aimee Nezhukumatathil, Aleda Shirley
- 7:00 p.m. Country Dinner
Taylor Grocery
Taylor Grocery Band
Taylor, Mississippi
(Reservations Required)

SATURDAY, APRIL 1

- 9:00 a.m. Writing about Politics
Curtis Wilkie, moderator
James Gill, Trent Lott, Thomas Oliphant
- 10:30 a.m. Finding a Voice/Reaching an Audience
Barry Hannah, moderator
T. A. Barron, Nickole Brown, Alex Glass,
Sarah Gorham, Starling Lawrence
- 1:30 p.m. Writing about Art and Artists
William Dunlap, moderator
Patti Carr Black, Mary Lynn Kotz,
Annalyn Swan
- 2:30 p.m. Readings/Remarks
Tom Franklin, moderator
Michael Knight, Lewis Nordan,
Natasha Trethewey
- 3:30 p.m. Writing Literary Lives
Ted Ownby, moderator
Larry L. King, Suzanne Marrs,
Darlene Harbour Unrue
- 5:00 p.m. Book Signing
Off Square Books

BRUCE NEWMAN



From left:
Jim Dickinson,
Slade Lewis,
Duff Dorrough

The Yalobushwhackers is *Thacker Mountain Radio's* house band each week. The band is led by Jim Dickinson, the legendary musician and producer whose career includes work with Sam Phillips at Sun Records, the Rolling Stones at Muscle Shoals, and Bob Dylan, with whom he shared a Grammy for Album of the Year in 1997. The band also includes Delta guitarist Duff Dorrough, formerly of "Mississippi's House Band," the Tangents, bassist Slade Lewis, who performs locally with Wiley & the Checkmates, and Wallace Lester on drums.

Young Authors Fair

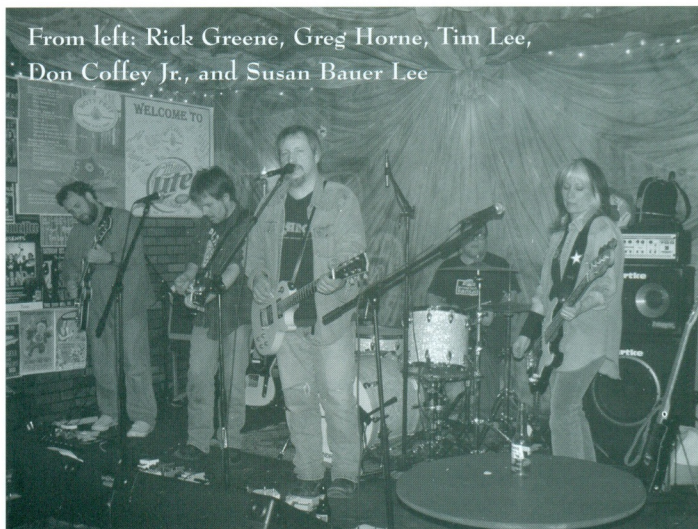
Students, teachers, and parents are invited to the Lafayette County Library to see the book display and meet with Sharon M. Draper after school on Thursday, March 30, and to attend a book signing for T. A. Barron and Sharon M. Draper at Square Books Jr. 3:30–4:30 p.m. on Friday, March 31.

Baxter Knowlton

Illustrating the 2006 Oxford Conference for the Book posters, printed programs, and T-shirts is a portrait of Shelby Foote by Baxter Knowlton. His portraits illustrated materials for two previous conference, Walker Percy in 2004 and Flannery O'Connor in 2005.

Baxter Knowlton is a native Mississippian who currently lives in Little Rock, Arkansas. Educated at Yale University, Knowlton has exhibited throughout Mississippi, and his work appears in collections throughout the Southeast. His work can also be seen at L&M's Kitchen in Oxford.

From left: Rick Greene, Greg Horne, Tim Lee,
Don Coffey Jr., and Susan Bauer Lee



For the past two decades, Tim Lee has been a part of the indie rock scene in the South. Starting with his early '80s recordings with the Windbreakers, Lee's work has been praised by the likes of *Rolling Stone*, the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, and *Creem*. Since the late 1980s, Lee has released a half dozen solo records, including three in the past three years. Following the release of 2004's *No Discretion, No Depression* hailed Lee as "a veteran artist still making quality music that you can be proud to turn up loud." His latest, *Concrete Dog*, is slated for an April release.

The Speakers



CLAIBORNE BARKSDALE is executive director of the Barksdale Reading Institute at the University of Mississippi. After earning BA and JD degrees from Ole Miss, he practiced law in Jackson for five years, was legislative coordinator for Senator Thad Cochran for four years, spent a year as a clerk for the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals,

and has served as counsel for communications companies since 1983.

T. A. BARRON is the author of five novels in *The Lost Years of Merlin* series; *The Heroic Ventures of Kate* trilogy; two novels in his new *Great Tree of Avalon* trilogy; *Tree Girl*, an adventure story for young children; the autobiographical *Where Is Grandpa?* and another picture book; two nature books; and *The Hero's Trail: A Guide for a Heroic Life*.

His highly acclaimed work has garnered numerous awards, including the American Library Association's "Best Books" and the International Reading Association's "Teachers' Choice" designations. After receiving degrees from Princeton, Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar, and Harvard, Barron was a venture capitalist in New York City for eight years. In 1990 he moved to Colorado and became a full-time writer and conservationist.



PATTI CARR BLACK is the author of *Art in Mississippi, 1720-1980*, the first comprehensive study of art in the state. She has written and edited many other books dealing with Mississippi art and letters, including Agnes Grinstead Anderson's *Approaching the Magic Hour: Memories of Walter Anderson*, *Made by Hand: Mississippi*

Folk Art, *Documentary Photographs of Mississippi during the 1930s*, *Sea, Earth, Sky: The Art of Walter Anderson*, *Eudora Welty's World*, and *Eudora Welty: Early Escapades*.

NICKOLE BROWN is a poet and fiction writer. Her poems, stories, and essays have most recently appeared in Mammoth Books' *Sudden Stories* anthology, *Poets & Writers*, the *Writer's Chronicle*, *Kestrel Review*, *32 Poems*, the *Courtland Review*, and Starcherone Books' *PP/FF* anthology. She lives in Louisville, Kentucky, where she is director of marketing and development for Sarabande Books.



SARAH COMBS is a library specialist in the Collection Development Department of BWI, a Lexington, Kentucky-based book and audiovisual distributor that specializes in children's and young-adult literature for public libraries. Previously, she worked as a librarian and as a Latin and creative writing teacher.

CINDY DACH is the marketing director at Changing Hands Bookstore (CHB) in Tempe, Arizona. She is cofounder of PAGE 23, a group at CHB dedicated to cultivating the next generation of readers through programs and book recommendations. With PAGE 23 she created Lit-Noise, a one-night festival featuring authors and bands.

Dach moderates "Fems with Pens," a teenage writing group and a teen advisory council. Also, she is the creator of several tours that bring together authors to promote their books in bars and restaurants in cooperation with independent bookstores across the country.



JIM DEES is the host of *Thacker Mountain Radio*, a literature and music program on Mississippi's public radio stations. He has written for the *Oxford Eagle* and is a former editor of *Oxford Town*, for which he still contributes a weekly column. Most recently, he edited the collection *They Write among Us: New Stories and Essays from the Best of Oxford Writers*.

ELLEN DOUGLAS, the pseudonym of Mississippi author Josephine Ayres Haxton, is a National Book Award finalist and the author of six novels and two story collections. She has also published two books of nonfiction, *Truth: Four Stories I Am Finally Old Enough to Tell* and *Witnessing*, a collection of essays. Her first novel, *A Family's Affairs*, was named one of the ten best fiction titles of the year by the *New York Times*, as was *Black Cloud*, *White Cloud*. She received the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Awards in literature for *The Rock Cried Out* and *A Lifetime Burning*, was honored for her body of work by the Fellowship of Southern Writers in 1989, and received the 2000 American Academy of Arts and Letters Award in Literature.



CURT RICHTER



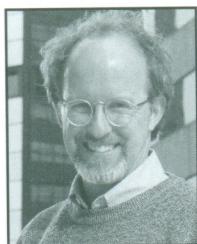
SHARON M. DRAPER, a professional educator as well as an accomplished author, has been honored as a National Teacher of the Year, is a three-time winner of the Coretta Scott King Literary Award, and is a *New York Times* bestselling author. Her books for teens include the Hazelwood High trilogy (*Tears of a Tiger*, *Forged by Fire*, *Darkness*

before Dawn), *Romiette and Julio*, *Double Dutch*, and *The Battle of Jericho*. Her new novel, *Copper Sun*, is based on the horrible reality of the slave trade. Draper has also published *Teaching from the Heart: Reflections*, *Encouragement*, *Inspiration*, another nonfiction book for teachers, and two volumes of poetry.

WILLIAM DUNLAP has distinguished himself as an artist, arts commentator, and educator since receiving his MFA from the University of Mississippi in 1969. His work can be found at museums across the nation and at United States embassies throughout the world. Recipient of many awards for his paintings, he received an Emmy Award for his work as visual arts commentator of *Around Town* on WETA-TV, Washington, D.C.



CAROL HARRISON



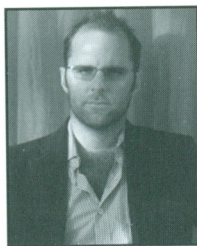
WARD EMLING has served as the director of the Mississippi Film Office since 1990 and previously from 1980 to 1983. He is on the board of directors and immediate past president of the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI). As an actor, he has appeared in *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Premonition*, *Beulah Land*, *The*

Mississippi, *Matt Houston*, *St. Elsewhere*, *Knot's Landing*, *Our House*, *Problem Child*, *Matlock*, and several national and regional commercials.

BETH ANN FENNELLY is the author of two poetry collections: *Open House* and *Tender Hooks*. Her poems have been appeared in the Best American Poetry Series volumes in 1996 and 2005, *The Pushcart Prize 2001*, and other anthologies. She received a 2003 Creative Writing Fellowship in Poetry from the National Endowment for the Arts. Her book of essays, *Great with Child: Letters to a Young Mother*, will be published by W. W. Norton this spring. Fennelly is assistant professor of English at the University of Mississippi.



MAUDE SCHUYTER CLAY

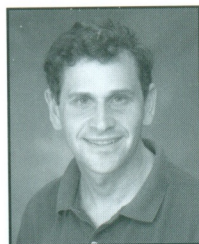


TAD FLORIDIS is associate publisher of Cannongate Books. Previously, he was an agent with Donadio & Olson, vice president for development at Longview Production, and executive vice president at Rightscenter.com, home of the Film Rights Directory, a comprehensive database of film/TV rights to literary properties.

TOM FRANKLIN, writer in residence at the University of Mississippi, is a widely published author of essays and stories. The title story of his first book, *Poachers*, won the Edgar Award for Best Short Story in 1999 and was selected for inclusion in several prestigious anthologies. His first novel, *Hell at the Breech*, was named by independent booksellers in all 50 states as one of the six best books in the country for 2003. His new novel, *Smonk: A Southern*, will be published next year by HarperPerennial. Recipient of a 1999 Guggenheim Fellowship, he has held the John and Renée Grisham position at Ole Miss and the Tennessee Williams Fellowship at Sewanee.



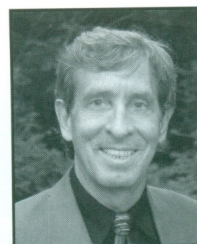
MAUDE SCHUYTER CLAY



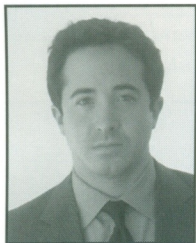
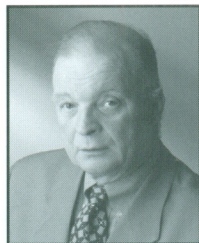
DAVID GALEF has published nine books: the novels *Flesh* and *Turning Japanese*; two children's books, *The Little Red Bicycle* and *Tracks*; two translations of Japanese proverbs, *Even Monkeys Fall from Trees* and *Even a Stone Buddha Can Talk*; a work of literary criticism, *The Supporting Cast*; an edited anthology of essays called *Second*

Thoughts: A Focus on Rereading; and, most recently, the short story collection *Laugh Track*. He is professor of English at the University of Mississippi, where he also administers the MFA program in creative writing.

GARY W. GALLAGHER teaches at the University of Virginia, where he is John L. Nau III Professor in the History of the American Civil War. One of the leading historians in his field, he is the author of *Lee and His Generals in War and Memory* and many other books on the Civil War, has coauthored and edited several works on individual battles and campaigns, and has published over 100 articles in scholarly journals and popular historical magazines. Among the many awards he has received for his research and writing are the Laney Prize for the best book on the Civil War, the William Woods Hassler Award for contributions to Civil War studies, the Lincoln Prize, and the Fletcher Pratt Award for the best nonfiction book on the Civil War.



JAMES GILL is a columnist for the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* and author of *Lords of Misrule: Mardi Gras and the Politics of Race in New Orleans*.



ALEX GLASS began his publishing career at the Putnam Berkley Publishing Group and was assistant to editor Robert Gottlieb for two years before becoming a literary agent. Glass also spent three years in the literature department of the National Endowment for the Arts, where he helped

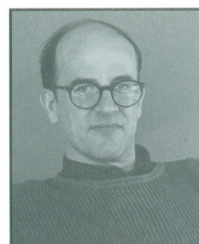
award over 70 federal grants to American fiction writers, poets, and translators. He specializes in literary fiction and has recently sold first novels to such publishers as William Morrow, Hyperion, Harcourt, and HarperCollins, among others.

SARAH GORHAM is the author of three collections of poetry—*The Cure*, *The Tension Zone*, and *Don't Go Back to Sleep*—and has published poems and essays in such magazines as *Poetry*, *The Nation*, *Antaeus*, *Paris Review*, *Georgia Review*, *Poets & Writers*, and *Poetry Northwest*. In 1994 Gorham founded Sarabande Books Inc., a small press in Louisville, Kentucky, devoted to the publication of poetry, short fiction, and literary nonfiction. She serves as Sarabande's president and editor in chief.



BARRY HANNAH is the author of ten works of fiction, including his first novel, *Geronimo Rex*, which was awarded the William Faulkner Prize and nominated for the National Book Award; *Ray*, nominated for the American Book Award; and *Airships*, a collection of stories widely regarded as a contemporary classic. His latest novel is *Yonder Stands Your Orphan*. He is writer in residence and director of the MFA program in creative writing at the University of Mississippi.

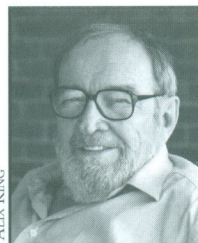
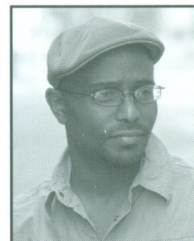
RICHARD HOWORTH was elected mayor of Oxford in 2001. He is founder of Square Books in Oxford, Mississippi, and past president of the American Booksellers Association.



BRIAN KEITH JACKSON is the author of three novels: *The View from Here*, winner of First Fiction Literary Award from the Black Caucus of the American Library Association; the critically acclaimed *Walking through Mirrors*; and *The Queen of Harlem*, which was named one of the Best Books of 2002 by *Black Issues Book Review*. Jackson

has received fellowships from Art Matters, the Jerome Foundation, and the Millay Colony of the Arts.

TYEHIMBA JESS is the author of *Leadbelly*, a biography written in verse and winner of the 2004 National Poetry Series. He received a Literature Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in 2004 and was a 2004–2005 Winter Fellow at the Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center. He is an assistant professor of creative writing at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

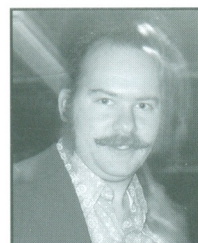
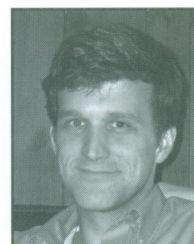


ALEX KING

LARRY L. KING is a novelist, journalist, and playwright. A high-school dropout who became a Nieman Fellow at Harvard, a Communications Fellow at Duke, and holder of an endowed chair at Princeton, he has written 13 books and seven stage plays as well as television documentaries, screenplays, short stories, and hundreds of magazine essays. He is

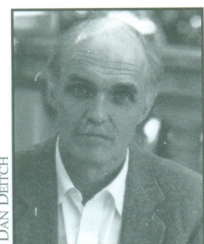
the only writer nominated for a unique "Triple Crown" of American letters: a National Book Award, a Broadway Tony, and a television Emmy. His other honors include the Stanley Walker Journalism Award and the Helen Hayes and Molly Goldwater awards as a playwright. King's new book is a memoir of Willie Morris.

MICHAEL KNIGHT is the author of two short-story collections, *Dogfight and Other Stories* and *Goodnight, Nobody*, and the novel *Divining Rod*. He is the recipient of several awards for his work, including the *Dictionary of Literary Biography's* 1999 Best First Novel Award, the Fellowship of Southern Writers' 1999 New Writing Award, and a 1999 Special Citation in Fiction from the PEN/Hemingway Foundation. He serves as the director of the creative writing program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and is the 2005–2006 John and Renée Grisham Visiting Southern Writer at the University of Mississippi.



JAMIE KORNEGAY operates the new Turnrow Book Co. in Greenwood, Mississippi. His fiction has appeared in *Stories from the Blue Moon Cafe II*, *The Alumni Grill*, and *They Write among Us: New Stories and Essays from the Best of Oxford Writers*.

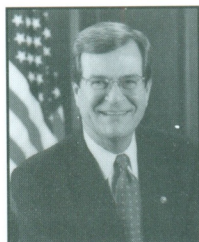
MARY LYNN KOTZ is the author of *Rauschenberg: Art and Life* and three other books, including *A Passion for Equality*, written with her husband, Nick Kotz. She is a contributing editor to *ARTnews* magazine and has written for major magazines since receiving her degree in journalism from the University of Mississippi.



DAN DEITCH

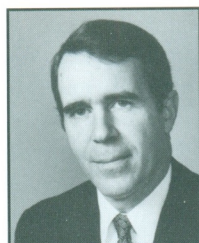
STARLING LAWRENCE is editor in chief and vice chairman at W. W. Norton. He is the author of two novels, *Montenegro* and *The Lightning Keeper*, and the story collection *Legacies*. His fiction has been awarded the Lytle Prize by the *Sewanee Review* and the Balch Prize by the *Virginia Quarterly Review*.

TRENT LOTT received BS and JD degrees from the University of Mississippi and practiced law in Pascagoula before going to Washington as assistant to Representative William Colmer of Mississippi. Lott was elected to Congress in 1972 and has served in the U.S. Senate since 1988. He is the author of the recently published memoir *Herding Cats: A Life in Politics*.



BARBARA LOWE teaches English at Oxford High School. As part of her doctoral work at the University of Mississippi, she wrote a dissertation titled "Eying the Prize: Race Relations in Newbery Award Novels, 1922-2000."

MICHAEL McDONNELL is president of West Union Corporation in Memphis, Tennessee. A graduate of Yale with a major in history, he is a founding member of the Wolf River Book Club, which has met monthly for more than three decades. Shelby Foote was one of the seven members of the club.



SUZANNE MARRS is the author of *Eudora Welty: A Biography*, *One Writer's Imagination: The Fiction of Eudora Welty*, and *The Welty Collection: A Guide to the Eudora Welty Manuscripts and Documents at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History*. She is the E. B. Stewart Family Professor in Language and Literature at Millsaps College.



JO KAN

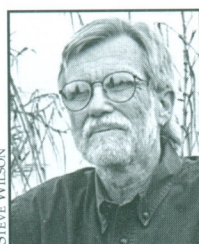
JAMES MEEK is an award-winning journalist and author of *The People's Act of Love*, nominated for the 2005 Booker Prize. He has also published two other novels, *Mcfarlane Boils the Sea* and *Drivetime*, and two story collections, *Last Orders* and *The Museum of Doubt*. He lived in the former Soviet Union from 1991 to 1999 and

now lives in London, where he writes for the *Guardian* and contributes to the *London Review of Books* and *Granta*.

AIMEE NEZHUKUMATATHIL has received many awards for her poems, which have been widely published in journals and anthologies. Her chapbook, *Fishbone*, won the Snail's Pace Press Prize, and her first full-length collection, *Miracle Fruit*, won the *Foreword Magazine's* Poetry Book of the Year Award and the Tupelo Press First Book Prize. She was the 2000-2001 Diane Middlebrook Poetry Fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and is now assistant professor of English at State University of New York-Fredonia.



D. PARSONS

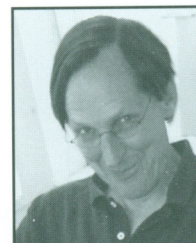


STEVE WILSON

LEWIS NORDAN is the author of four novels—*The Music of the Swamp*, *Wolf Whistle*, *The Sharpshooter Blues*, and *Lightning Song*—and *Sugar among the Freaks*, selected stories from his collections *Welcome to the Arrow-Catcher Fair* and *The All-Girl Football Team*. The setting for his fiction is Arrow Catcher, a place similar to

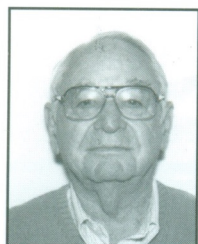
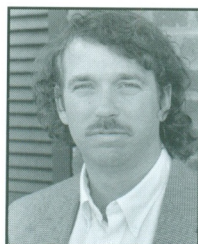
his hometown of Itta Bena in the Mississippi Delta. He is also author of a memoir, *Boy with Loaded Gun*. Lewis Nordan has received the Southern Book Critics Circle Award, two Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters awards, and three American Library Association awards.

THOMAS OLIPHANT is recently retired Washington correspondent for the *Boston Globe* and a nationally syndicated columnist. A noted political commentator, he is a frequent guest on *The News Hour* with Jim Lehrer. *Washington Magazine* named him one of the country's Top Ten political writers and one of Washington's 50 most influential journalists. He is the author of *Praying for Gil Hodges: A Memoir of the 1955 World Series and One Family's Love of the Brooklyn Dodgers*. A collection of his essays is in progress.



ROSEMARY OLIPHANT-INGHAM is associate professor of English education at the University of Mississippi, where she teaches children's and adolescent literature. She has published a biographical sketch of Louisa May Alcott and a biography of Karen Hesse.

TED OWNBY is professor of history and Southern Studies at the University of Mississippi. He is the author of *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1905–1920* and *American Dreams in Mississippi: Consumers, Poverty, and Culture, 1830–1998*.



WILLIAM PEARSON is a semi-retired cotton farmer in Sumner, Mississippi. He studied English at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and since 1973 has been a member of the Wolf River Book Club in Memphis, Tennessee.

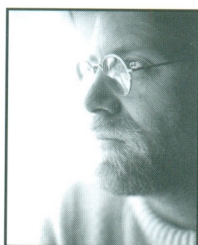
JACK PENDARVIS is the author of *The Mysterious Secret of the Valuable Treasure*, a collection of stories and a novella. His writing has been published in the *Believer*, *McSweeney's Online Tendency*, and *14 Hills*, and his stories have been anthologized in two volumes of *Stories from the Blue Moon Café*, *The Alumni Grill*, and the Pushcart Prize anthology. He wrote the theme song for Cartoon Network's *Popeye Show* and the score for the feature film *Dropping Out*. Pendarvis spent much of his childhood and adult life in Bayou La Batre, Alabama, and now lives in Atlanta, Georgia.



PAMELA PRIDGEN received a master of library science degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and is director of the Library of Hattiesburg, Petal, and Forrest County. She has served as president of the Mississippi Library Association and is a board member of the Mississippi Library Commission.

WILLIAM REED, of Memphis, Tennessee, was a member of Shelby Foote's book club. Foote missed very few meetings, and only for illness, according to Reed, who added: "We'd usually talk about everything but the book." He said Foote was a particular champion of Proust and Chekhov, and the last book Foote assigned the group was Carson McCullers's *The Member of the Wedding*.

GEORGE SAUNDERS has published two short story collections, *CivilWarLand in Bad Decline* and *Pastoralea*, and a children's book, illustrated by Lane Smith, *The Very Persistent Gappers of Frip*. His fiction has appeared in the *New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *Story*, and many other publications. He won the National Magazine Award in 1994 for his story "The 400-pound CEO" and again in 1996 for the story "Bounty." He has explored for oil in Sumatra, played guitar in a Texas bar band, and worked in a slaughterhouse. He teaches creative writing at Syracuse University.



ELAINE H. SCOTT is former chair of the Arkansas State Board of Education, a member of the Education Commission of the States (1987–1997), and a leader in several organizations concerned with education, teacher training, libraries, and literacy. She has worked with the Reading Is Fundamental program since 1974 and received the RIF Leader for Literacy Award in April 1994.

ALEDA SHIRLEY is the author of three volumes of poetry—*Chinese Architecture*, winner of the Poetry Society of America's 1987 Norma Farber First Book Award; *Long Distance*; and *Dark Familiar*, forthcoming from Sarabande Books. She has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Mississippi Arts Commission, and Kentucky Arts Council, and the Kentucky Foundation for Women. Her poems have appeared in such places as the *American Poetry Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *Poetry*, and *Virginia Quarterly Review*. She edited *The Beach Book*, a collection of stories, essays, and poems. She is visiting Straddlefork lecturer in creative writing at Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi.



CAROLYN ELLIS STATON joined the faculty of the School of Law at the University of Mississippi in 1977 and was appointed as provost and vice chancellor for Academic Affairs in June 1999.

ANNALYN SWAN is the author, with Mark Stevens, of *De Kooning: An American Master*, winner of the 2004 National Book Critics Circle Award, the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for Biography, and other major awards. A native of Biloxi, Mississippi, Swan is a former staff writer at *Time* and an award-winning critic and senior arts editor at *Newsweek*. She has written for the *New Republic*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, and the *New York* magazine. Three years ago, she founded, with longtime editor Peter Bernstein, ASAP Media, a book, magazine, and internet development company.



JOANNE CHAN