

Oxford Conference for the Book Participants, 2019

JASON BERRY is an independent writer, documentary film producer, and journalist living in New Orleans. *City of a Million Dreams: A History of New Orleans at Year 300* is his tenth book and the basis for a companion film documentary he is producing, slated for release in 2019. He is also the author of *Last of the Red Hot Poppas*, a comic novel about Louisiana politics, and *Up from the Cradle of Jazz*, a history of New Orleans music. Berry is a longtime contributor to the *Daily Beast* and the *National Catholic Reporter*, among other outlets.

WILLIAM BOYLE is from Brooklyn, New York. His debut novel, *Gravesend*, was nominated for the Grand Prix de Littérature Policière in France and shortlisted for the New Blood Dagger in the UK. A new edition of *Gravesend* and Boyle's follow-ups *The Lonely Witness* and the recently published *A Friend Is a Gift You Give Yourself* are also available from Pegasus Crime. He lives in Oxford, Mississippi, and teaches at the University of Mississippi.

KARIDA L. BROWN is assistant professor of sociology and African American studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her book *Gone Home: Race and Roots through Appalachia* offers a much-needed corrective to the current whitewashing of Appalachia. In telling the stories of African Americans living and working in Appalachian coal towns, Brown offers a sweeping look at race, identity, changes in politics and policy, and black migration in the region and beyond. Drawn from over 150 original oral history interviews with former and current residents of Harlan County, Kentucky, Brown reconstructs the life histories of black coal miners, showing the mutable and shifting nature of collective identity, the struggles of labor and representation, and that Appalachia is far more diverse than you think.

MICHAEL CARROLL's debut story collection, *Little Reef*, won the Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and was a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award for Gay Fiction and the Publishing Triangle Award. His work has appeared in *Ontario Review*, *Boulevard*, the *Yale Review*, the *Harvard Review*, the *Southwest Review*, *Open City*, and *The New Penguin Book of Gay Short Stories*. Originally from Jacksonville, Florida, he is married to writer Edmund White and lives in New York City. *Stella Maris: And Other Key West Stories* is his most recent short story collection.

ELIZABETH CATTE is the author of the *What You Are Getting Wrong about Appalachia*, a critical look *Hillbilly Elegy*-fication of politics that uses radical history to challenge perceptions of the region as a hub of white, working-class woe. She also recently published, as coeditor, *55 Strong: Inside the West Virginia Teachers' Strike*. Catte's work has been featured in or on many outlets, including *All Things Considered*, the *Guardian*, the *Nation*, the *New Yorker*, *Bookforum*, *On the Media*, *Guernica*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *New York Review of Books*.

DENNIS COVINGTON is the author of two novels and three nonfiction books. He is the author of *Revelation: A Search for Faith in a Violent Religious World* and *Salvation on Sand Mountain*, a National Book Award finalist. His articles have been published in the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, *Lapham's Quarterly*, *Vogue*, and many other periodicals. He was born in Birmingham, Alabama, and earned a BA from the University of Virginia and an MFA from

the Iowa Writers' Workshop, where he studied under Raymond Carver. He currently teaches creative writing at Texas Tech University.

SHARON M. DRAPER is a professional educator, as well as an accomplished writer of over thirty award-winning books for adolescents and teachers, including *Copper Sun*, winner the Coretta Scott King Award, the highly acclaimed Jericho and Hazelwood trilogies, and *Out of my Mind*. She was the National Teacher of the Year, has been honored at the White House six times, and was selected by the US State Department to be a literary ambassador to the children of Africa as well as China. In 2015 she was honored by the American Library Association as the recipient of the Margaret A. Edwards Award for lifetime literary achievement. Her newest novel is *Blended*.

ANNIE DUKE is an author, professional speaker, decision strategist, and former professional poker player. In her book *Thinking in Bets: Making Smarter Decisions When You Don't Have All the Facts*, Duke reveals to readers the lessons that have been cultivated by combining her academic studies in cognitive psychology with real-life decision making experiences at the poker table. For two decades, Duke was one of the top poker players in the world. In 2004, she bested a field of 234 players to win her first World Series of Poker (WSOP) bracelet. The same year, she triumphed in the \$2 million winner-take-all, invitation-only WSOP Tournament of Champions. In 2010, she won the prestigious NBC National Heads-Up Poker Championship. Prior to becoming a professional poker player, Duke was awarded a National Science Foundation Fellowship to study Cognitive Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. She currently resides in the Philadelphia area.

RALPH EUBANKS is the author of *The House at the End of the Road: The Story of Three Generations of an Interracial Family in the American South* and *Ever Is a Long Time: A Journey into Mississippi's Dark Past*, which *Washington Post* book critic Jonathan Yardley named as one of the best nonfiction books of the year. He has contributed articles to the *Washington Post* "Outlook" and "Style" sections, the *Wall Street Journal*, *WIRED*, the *New Yorker*, and National Public Radio. He is a recipient of a 2007 Guggenheim Fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation and has been a fellow at the New America Foundation. He is the former editor of the *Virginia Quarterly Review* at the University of Virginia and served as director of publishing at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. from 1995 to 2013.

BRAIN FOSTER grew up in Shannon, Mississippi, and earned a BA in African American studies from the University of Mississippi and an MA and a PhD in sociology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His research takes a critical, interdisciplinary, and multi-method approach to the study of race, culture, and inequality, with particular attention to post-soul (i.e. post-1970s) black cultures in the rural American South. In general, his work addresses two questions: how have rural southern communities changed in the fifty-plus years since the civil rights and Black Power movements, and what are the perspectives and experiences of black southerners living in these contexts? Geographically, much of his work is set in the Mississippi Delta.

MARK HAINDS worked for two decades as the research coordinator for the Longleaf Alliance and as a research associate with Auburn University. He resigned these dual positions in

November 2014 to walk the 1,000-mile Texas-Mexico border. Hains's walk began at International Boundary Marker 1 in El Paso and ended over a thousand miles later at Boca Chica Beach in Brownsville, where the Rio Grande empties into the Gulf of Mexico. From right-wing ranchers to cowboy poets to human-rights activists to fence/wall opponents, Hains met a myriad of people along the way who were eager to discuss the balance between border security and immigration justice. Hains's trek ultimately resulted in his book, *Border Walk*, and he was the subject of the feature-length film *La Frontera*, filmed and produced by Rex Jones of the University of Mississippi's Southern Documentary Project. Hains and Jones will screen the film and discuss the book, to be followed by a Q&A.

GABINO IGLESIAS is a writer, editor, journalist, and book reviewer living in Austin, Texas. He is the author of *Coyote Songs*, *Zero Saints*, and *Gutmouth*. He is the book reviews editor at *Pank Magazine*, the TV/film editor at *Entropy Magazine*, and a columnist for *LitReactor* and *Clash Media*. His nonfiction has appeared in places like the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *El Nuevo Día*, and other venues. The stuff that's made up has been published in places like *Red Fez*, *Flash Fiction Offensive*, *Drunk Monkeys*, *Bizarro Central*, *Paragraph Line*, *Divergent Magazine*, *Cease*, *Cows*, and many horror, crime, surrealist, and bizarre anthologies. When not writing or reading, he has worked as a dog whisperer, a witty communications professor, and a ballerina assassin. He teaches at Southern New Hampshire University's MFA program.

REX JONES is a documentary filmmaker who joined the Southern Documentary Project in 2011. Jones is a native of Hickory, Mississippi, and an MFA graduate in science and natural history filmmaking from Montana State University. His films have been broadcast nationally on PBS, won awards from various organizations, and been chosen as official selections of film festivals nationwide. He is also the coauthor, with Lecile Harris, of *Lecile: This Ain't My First Rodeo*, which won the 2016 Will Rogers Medallion Award for Excellence in Western Literature (Biography and Memoir).

KIESE LAYMON, Otilie Schillig Professor of English and Creative Writing at the University of Mississippi, was born and raised in Jackson, Mississippi. He is the author of the novel *Long Division* and a collection of essays, *How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America*. Most recently, he is the author of the memoir *Heavy: An American Memoir*, which won the Andrew Carnegie Medal and has been named a Best Book of 2018 by *New York Times* critics, *Publishers Weekly*, NPR, *Broadly*, *Buzzfeed (Nonfiction)*, *The Undeclared*, *Library Journal*, the *Washington Post*, *Southern Living*, and *Entertainment Weekly*.

DAVE LUCAS was born and raised in Cleveland. He studied literature and poetry at John Carroll University (BA, 2002), the University of Virginia (MFA, 2004), and the University of Michigan (PhD, 2014). His first book of poems, *Weather*, received the 2012 Ohioana Book Award for Poetry. Named by Rita Dove as one of thirteen "young poets to watch," he has also received a Discovery/*The Nation* Prize and a Cleveland Arts Prize. In 2018 he was appointed the second Poet Laureate of the State of Ohio. A cofounder of Cleveland Book Week and Brews + Prose at Market Garden Brewery, he teaches at Case Western Reserve University.

MEREDITH MCCARROLL is the director of writing and rhetoric at Bowdoin College. She was born and raised in Western North Carolina and earned her PhD at the University of Tennessee. Her recent book, *Unwhite: Appalachia, Race, and Film*, demonstrates how typical characterizations of Appalachian people serve as foils to set off and define the “whiteness” of non-Appalachian southerners. In this dynamic, Appalachian characters become the racial other. Analyzing the representation of the people of Appalachia in films such as *Deliverance*, *Cold Mountain*, *Medium Cool*, *Norma Rae*, *Cape Fear*, *The Killing Season*, and *Winter’s Bone* through the critical lens of race and specifically whiteness, McCarroll offers a reshaping of the understanding of the relationship between racial and regional identities.

TRAVIS MCDADE is curator of law rare books at the University of Illinois College of Law and the country’s foremost expert on crimes against rare books, maps, documents, and other printed cultural heritage resources. He is the author of four books on the subject. The first, *The Book Thief: The True Crimes of Daniel Spiegelman*, highlighted the federal judicial recognition of books as cultural objects whose value cannot be adequately captured by market price. His second book is *Thieves of Book Row: New York’s Most Notorious Rare Book Ring and the Man Who Ended it*. His most recent book is *Torn from Their Bindings: A Story of Art, Science, and the Pillaging of American University Libraries*. He lectures extensively on the subject of rare book crime, and is an active member of the Mystery Writers of America.

SCOTT MOYERS was Wright Thompson’s editor for *The Cost of These Dreams: Sports Stories and Other Serious Business* and vice president and publisher of the Penguin Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House. He lives in Brooklyn, New York, with his family.

ELLE NASH is the author of *Animals Eat Each Other*. She is a founding editor of *Witch Craft Magazine* and a fiction editor at *Hobart Pulp*. Her work has been featured in *Volume 1 Brooklyn*, *The Fanzine*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *The Offing*, *Enclave*, and other places. She lives in the Ozarks with her husband, daughter, and their dog. Occasionally she reads tarot in exchange for money.

DAN SANTAT is a *New York Times* best-selling author who has published more than a hundred books for children. He is best known for titles such as, *The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend*, which won the 2015 Randolph Caldecott Medal, *After the Fall (How Humpty Dumpty Got Back up Again)*, which was listed as one of NPR’s Best Books of 2017, and *Oh No! (Or How My Science Project Destroyed the World)*, which won the Silver Medal in illustration from the Society of Illustrators. He is also the creator of the Disney animated series, *The Replacements*. Dan lives in Los Angeles with his lovely wife, two kids, and a menagerie of pets.

SALVATORE SCIBONA’s first novel, *The End*, was a finalist for the National Book Award and winner of the Young Lions Fiction Award. His work has won a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Pushcart Prize, an O. Henry Award, and a Whiting Award; and the *New Yorker* named him one of its “20 Under 40” fiction writers to watch. He directs the Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library. *The Volunteer* is Scibona’s latest book.

LEANNE SHAPTON is an artist and author of several books, including *Swimming Studies* (winner of the 2012 National Book Critics Circle Award for Autobiography), *Important*

Artifacts and Personal Property from the Collection of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris, and a coauthor of the *New York Times*–bestselling *Women in Clothes*. She is also the cofounder of J&L Books, a nonprofit publisher of art and photography books. She lives in New York City. *Guestbook: Ghost Stories* is Shapton’s latest book.

WRIGHT THOMPSON is a senior writer for *ESPN: The Magazine*. He lives in Oxford, Mississippi, with his wife, Sonia, and their daughter, Wallace. Prior to joining ESPN in 2006, he worked as a newspaper reporter in Kansas City and New Orleans. He is a Montana landowner, an Ole Miss Rebels football fan, and a devoted son of his birthplace, the Mississippi Delta. The recipient of numerous awards for journalism, Thompson is most proud of the Ernie Pyle Award and the Dan Jenkins Medal. *The Cost of These Dreams: Sports Stories and Other Serious Business* is his first book.

WILLY VLAUTIN was born and raised in Reno, Nevada. He started playing guitar and writing songs as a teenager and quickly became immersed in music. It was a Paul Kelly song, based on Raymond Carver’s “Too Much Water So Close to Home,” that inspired him to start writing stories. Vlautin has published five novels, including *The Motel Life*, *Northline*, *Lean on Pete*, *The Free*, and, most recently, *Don’t Skip out on Me*. He also founded the band Richmond Fontaine in 1994. The band produced eleven studio albums plus a handful of live recordings and EPs. Driven by Vlautin’s dark, storylike songwriting, the band, now retired, achieved critical acclaim at home and across the UK and Europe. In 2014 Vlautin formed the Delines with singer Amy Boone (Damnations) and released their first album, *Colfax*. Vlautin currently resides in Scappoose, Oregon.

KEN WELLS covered car wrecks and gator sightings for his hometown weekly before leaving the bayous for a journalism career that included twenty-four years on the *Wall Street Journal*. He’s written five novels of the Cajun bayous and lives in Chicago. His latest book is *Gumbo Life: Tales from the Roux Bayou*.

DAVID WHARTON is the Center for the Study of Southern Culture’s director for documentary studies and an assistant professor of Southern Studies. His first book, *The Soul of a Small Texas Town: Photographs, Memories, and History from McDade*, was published in 2000, and he published his second book of photographs, *Small Town South*, in 2013. Wharton’s most recent book is *The Power of Belief: Spiritual Landscapes from the Rural South*, published in 2016. His photographs record rural landscapes and townscapes from across the South.

EDMUND WHITE is the author of many novels, including *A Boy’s Own Story*, *The Beautiful Room Is Empty*, *The Farewell Symphony*, and, most recently, *Our Young Man*. His nonfiction includes *City Boy*, *Inside a Pearl*, and other memoirs, including, most recently, *The Unpunished Vice: A Life of Reading*; *The Flâneur*, about Paris; and literary biographies and essays. He was named the winner of the 2018 PEN/Saul Bellow Award for Achievement in American Fiction. White lives in New York.

JESSICA WILKERSON has a joint appointment in history and Southern Studies at the University of Mississippi. She earned her MA in women’s history from Sarah Lawrence College and PhD in history from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. *To Live Here, You*

Have to Fight: How Women Led Appalachian Movements for Social Justice is her first book. She has also written for *100 Days in Appalachia*, *Salon*, *Rewire News*, and *Longreads*. Her research interests include women's and gender history, working-class history, US social movements, Appalachian history, and oral history. Wilkerson teaches classes in southern history, women's history, contemporary US history, and oral history.

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 twenty-six 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*, *The Fall of the House of Zeus: The Rise and Ruin of America's Most Powerful Trial Lawyer*, and *Assassins, Eccentrics, Politicians, and Other Persons of Interest: Fifty Pieces from the Road*. Wilkie holds the Kelly Gene Cook Chair of Journalism at the University of Mississippi. His latest book, with Thomas Oliphant, is *The Road to Camelot: Inside JFK's Five-Year Campaign*.

DAVID ZURICK earned his PhD in geography from the University of Hawaii and the East-West Center, Honolulu. His books and photography have won numerous awards, including the National Outdoor Book Award and Kentucky Arts Council Al Smith Visual Artist Fellowship Award (twice). In 2009 he received the Mount Everest Award for his lifetime achievement in Himalaya studies. He is a fellow of the Explorers Club, and his latest book is *A Fantastic State of Ruin: The Painted Towns of Rajasthan*, a series of color photographs made in India. Zurick, also a filmmaker, completed his documentary film *Crossing Sacred Ground* in 2017, which has been screened in multiple film festivals.