

The Society for the Study of Southern Literature



December 2006
Volume 40, Issue 1

NEWSLETTER

Published at the University of Arkansas
Visit the SSSL Web Site at:
<<http://www.uark.edu/ua/sssl/>>

Editor: Robert H. Brinkmeyer, Jr.

Assistant Editor: Cassandra M. Edwards

SSSL Executive Council

Robert Phillips (President)
[rlp@bellsouth.net]

Jeff Abernathy (Secretary/Treasurer)
[abernathy@augustana.edu]

Susan Donaldson (President Elect)
[vandeiden@aol.com]

William Andrews (Past President)
[wandrews@email.unc.edu]

Martyn Bone (2005-2007)
[bone@hum.ku.dk]

Deborah Cohn (2005-2007)
[dncohn@indiana.edu]

Leigh Anne Duck (2005-2007)
[lduck@memphis.edu]

Jennifer Greeson (2005-2007)
[greeson@princeton.edu]

Susan Donaldson (2004-2005)
[vandeiden@aol.com]

Minrose Gwin (2004-2005)
[mgwin@email.unc.edu]

Pearn McHaney (2004-2005)
[pmchaney@gsu.edu]

James Watkins (2004-2005)
[jwatkins@berry.edu]

Ed Piacentino (2003-2005)
[epiacent@highpoint.edu]

Riché Richardson (2003-2005)
[rrichardson@ucdavis.edu]

Judith Sensibar (2003-2005)
[jsensi@aol.com]

Jon Smith (2003-2005)
[jon@ra.msstate.edu]

From the Editor:

Greetings once again from the Ozarks where winter has come with a vengeance, making the long hot summer seem pretty inviting. As the world continues to unravel in disarray, I'm reminded of lines from Auden: "Uncertain and afraid / As the clever hopes expire / Of a low dishonest decade / Waves of anger and fear / Circulate over the bright / And darkened lands of the earth." With this world's turmoil, it seems that interest in localism and regionalism has only risen, no doubt as terrified (or terror-tired, terror-wired) people turn inward in a search for some sense of order and security. I remember after 9/11 that I instinctively retreated to my garden, working the dirt and cultivating the plants that were unaffected by the events back east. There was a peace there that wasn't anywhere else. Thoreau I'm not, but I do find that a quiet retreat can help.

This has been an exciting year in Southern literary and cultural scholarship, with new studies, such as Leigh Anne Duck's *The Nation's Region: Southern Modernism, Segregation, and U.S. Nationalism*, recontextualizing, in both a national and an international context, Southern writing. I only mention Duck's book because I've just read it—there have been many other noteworthy works this year that examine the regional impulse, in literature and culture, within contexts that call into question many of the givens of Southern scholarship. If this year's work is a harbinger, look for many more exciting studies to be appearing shortly.

This is my last year at the University of Arkansas, and I'm not sure what that means for the Newsletter. It's possible I could take it to the University of South Carolina, where I'm bound, but I've been editor for a while now and am certainly willing to pass this position on to someone else. Suggestions are welcome, as are statements of interest from others who might want to be editor.

Happy holidays to one and all. Be safe and be loving.

Bob Brinkmeyer

A Message from the SSSL President:

Outgoing President's Report

The election for four new members of the Executive Council is upon us. The Nominations Committee, Annette Trefzer, chair, with Scott Romine and Martyn Bone, has presented us with six excellent candidates for the four positions—Melanie Benson, Keith Cartwright, Harriet Pollack, Riche' Richardson, Helen Taylor, and James Watkins. About two decades ago the Executive Council amended the SSSL constitution to mandate that one member from outside the SAMLA-SCMLA region be elected each year to demonstrate that the literature of the American South enjoys an appeal to a larger audience than that in the region alone. In recent years that has not been a problem at all, and this year at least two of those elected will be from institutions outside the region. If the trend continues we may need another amendment to insure that the institutions in the region have some representation.

The problem now is that very few of our members vote. You will soon receive an e-mail ballot; please take time to return it. Our elections have averaged below fifty ballots over the last few years. We have been very lucky in that the nominating committees have chosen excellent candidates and that we really have had no controversial or divisive issues. But the SSSL needs for its membership to participate in all of the activities it supports, most especially these elections.

The SSSL's on-going projects remain healthy, particularly the re-invigorated bibliography. Mary Weeks-Baxter, chair of the committee, has asked that SSSL members check the bibliography to insure that our own work is accurately represented there. The bibliography can of course be a valuable tool designed and managed to fit our particular needs, but here again the active participation of the Society's membership helps.

Martyn Bone is working on an SSSL listserv and an H-Net Discussion Network. His work offers vast possibilities for us; please be ready to lend a hand.

It has been my pleasure to be the president of the SSSL for the last two years. The Society has failed to develop, as I hoped it would, into the international network of scholars and businesses controlling the intellectual life of the universe, but it has survived. There are many to whom I am deeply indebted, but particularly to Riche' Richardson and Jon Smith, who together were responsible for the success of our meeting in Birmingham last spring. Thanks too to all of you who chaired and served on the various committees that keep the SSSL in business, and to Jeff Abernathy, who holds all of this together. I look forward to working with Susan Donaldson, our incoming president, who, if anybody can, will make us the captains of academe.

Robert L. Phillips

UPCOMING EVENTS , ANNOUNCEMENTS, & CALLS FOR PAPERS

SSSL at MLA

As usual, SSSL is sponsoring two sessions at this year's MLA Conference. The conference will be held in Philadelphia, December 27-30.

The South before "the South"

Friday, 29 December, 8:30-9:45 a.m.

Location: Grand Ballroom Salon K, Philadelphia Marriott

Presiding: Colin Dayan, Vanderbilt

1. "'From India's Savage Plain': How West Becomes East in the Colonial American South," Jim Egan, Brown University
2. "The Seeds of Rebellion and Repression in Pre-Southern Fiction: Victor Se'jour's 'The Mulatto,'" Edward Joseph Piacentino, High Point University
3. "On Native Ground," Eric Gary Anderson, George Mason University

The United States South in Non-United States Fiction

Saturday, 30 December, 1:45-3:00

Location: 306, Philadelphia Marriott

Presiding: Barbara Ladd, Emory

1. "'The Southern Man Don't Need Him Around Anyhow': Narratives of 'the South' in the Canadian Imaginary," Jade Ferguson, Cornell University
2. "'Dublin' Meanings': The (United States) South in *Finnegan's Wake*," Paul Philip Devlin, Fordham University, Bronx
3. "The Repeating Plantation: Images of Yoknapatawpha in the Global South," Alfred J. Lopez, University of Mississippi

* * * * *

"The Stories of Flannery and Faulkner"

Spring 2008 – Call for Papers

Georgia College & State University will host a conference on the short stories of Flannery O'Connor and William Faulkner, from Wednesday, April 2, to Saturday, April 5, 2008.

Jay Watson of the University of Mississippi will be a keynote speaker. Currently working on a study of the body in southern literature, Watson is the author of *Forensic Fictions: The Lawyer Figure in Faulkner*

and of essays on Faulkner, Lillian Smith, and Erskine Caldwell. He is the editor of the forthcoming collection *Conversations with Larry Brown*. The conference will also feature readings by fiction writer Allan Gurganus (*Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All*, *White People*, *The Practical Heart*, and *Plays Well with Others*), poet Alice Friman (*The Book of the Rotten Daughter*, *Zoo*, and *Inverted Fire*), and poet/nonfiction writer Martin Lammon (*News from Where I Live* and *Written in Water*, *Written in Stone*). The conference will offer tours of Milledgeville's historic district, the Old Governor's Mansion, O'Connor's farm home Andalusia, the Old State Capitol, and Central State Hospital.

To propose a paper for the conference, please send an abstract for 500+ words, by 1 August 2007, to Marshall Bruce Gentry, Stories of Flannery and Faulkner, Dept. of English, CBX 044, GCSU, Milledgeville, GA 31061. Your paper may discuss O'Connor's stories or Faulkner's stories or (especially) comparisons among stories by O'Connor and Faulkner. Those interested in chairing a session or those with questions about the conference should email bruce.gentry@gcsu.edu

* * * * *

The *Flannery O'Connor Review* webpage has a new URL:

<http://www2.gcsu.edu/library/sc/collections/oconnor/focreview/>

The Flannery O'Connor Collection webpage also has a new URL:

<http://www2.gcsu.edu/library/sc/foc.html>

* * * * *

Sarah Gordon Award

The 2006 Sarah Gordon Award, sponsored by the *Flannery O'Connor Review*, for an essay on O'Connor and/or southern studies, has co-winners this year. Denise Fidia of the University of Ottawa and Cynthia Barounis of the University of Illinois-Chicago will split the \$500 prize, and their essays will be published in the *Flannery O'Connor Review*.

Entries for the 2007 Gordon Award should be postmarked between 1 Apr. 2007 and 1 Aug. 2007 and mailed to *Flannery O'Connor Review*, Sarah Gordon Award, Department of English, CBX 44, GCSU, Milledgeville, GA 31061.

REVIEW of:

Singing the Lonely Heart, by Alana Valentine

Australian playwright, Alana Valentine, has written a most intriguing play about the life of Carson McCullers, *Singing the Lonely Heart*. The play had its world premiere in Sydney, at the New Theatre on 20 July, 2006, and was directed by Alex Galeazzi, with Abigail Austin playing Carson McCullers. I was invited along and, I have to admit, it was with some trepidation that I turned up for the preview. I was concerned that the play was going to offer a heavy-handed McCullers-as-lesbian account of her life and novels. However, although the play does – quite rightly — touch on the significant question of sexuality both in her novels and in her life, it does so in a sensitive and nuanced way. Ultimately, it presents McCullers as a naïf, in a world of freak shows in the South and drag bars in the North, and these become metaphors for her strong sense of being at odds with the world.

Valentine includes a particularly effective device in her play: the creation of an invisible friend, named Frankie, who accompanies Carson through the years from girlhood in Columbus to illness in Nyack. The addition of this figure is a means for Valentine to dramatise the conflicts within McCullers herself, not only those she experienced with society at large.

The play also subtly incorporates certain aspects of the novels, particularly her perhaps most autobiographical one, *The Member of the Wedding*. From this, Valentine takes the freak show, and that is where we first meet the young Carson. It is also where Carson first conjures up her invisible friend. Also, one of the recurrent settings of the play is a club, a sort of small-town bar that over the years refuses Carson entry, for one reason or another: her youth, her allegedly scandalous attitudes towards African Americans and finally, her “suspect” sexuality. In this way, Valentine has transported *The Member of the Wedding*’s neighbourhood girls’ club, from which the novel’s Frankie is excluded, to dramatise McCullers’ sense of her difference. Valentine again mines the novels for artistic means of expressing aspects of McCullers’ personality when she puts Carson in a red dress towards the end of the play, in order that she might enter the club as a “calculable woman.” This scene, with the mannish woman (Carson is dressed throughout the play in a white shirt, waistcoat, trousers and brogues) in the flaming red dress, directly draws upon a similar portrait of Miss Amelia in *The Ballad of the Sad Café*. Valentine’s citation and inclusion of aspects of the novels work extremely effectively to either vocalise or visually represent the “real” McCullers.

continued on page 5

Singing the Lonely Heart (continued from page 4)

Valentine has clearly read McCullers' novels closely and sensitively, while simultaneously remaining alert to the nuances of her life. Valentine apparently interviewed Mary Mercer, McCullers' psychiatrist-cum-friend, and corresponded with Virginia Spencer Carr, McCullers' American biographer. According to an article on www.sxnews.com.au “[t]he play won the Australian National Playwrights Centre’s New Dramatists Award, and was given a rehearsed reading in New York with a cast that included Academy Award-winner, Frances McDormand” under its then-title, *Southern Belle*. For anyone interested in McCullers, I thoroughly recommend getting in touch with Valentine — she might be happy to pass on copies of *Singing the Lonely Heart*.

Finally, how strange it was to be in the Deep South (yes, the Australian cast all had southern accents – or, at least their version of) on a rainy, wintry Sydney night!

Sarah Gleeson-White

(author of *Strange Bodies: Gender and Identity in the Novels of Carson McCullers*)

University of New South Wales, Australian Defence Force Academy, Canberra

26 July, 2006

Do you have ideas for future Newsletters? If so, let us hear from you!

We welcome your ideas and suggestions for the Newsletter, and we thank all those who have contributed to past issues. What would you like to see in future issues? We are especially interested in articles, essays, book reviews—any piece of writing you’d like to submit for consideration. Just drop us a line at the University of Arkansas, Kimpel Hall 333, Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701, or email us at sssl@uark.edu.

Time to Renew Your Membership?

In order to remain current and continue receiving SSSL notifications, please fill out and return the form on page 12 today! Also, be sure to renew your membership dues.

Moving?

Please send your new address (include both physical and email addresses) to: Jeff Abernathy, Dean of the College, Professor of English, Augustana College, 639 38th Street, Rock Island, Illinois 61201. Or email: abernathy@augustana.edu

SELECTED RECENT SCHOLARSHIP IN SOUTHERN LITERATURE

JOURNAL ARTICLES

African American Review

Abdur-Rahman, Aliyyah I. "'The Strangest Freaks of Despotism': Queer Sexuality in Antebellum African American Slave Narratives." 40.2 (2006): 223-237.

Andrade, Heather Russell. "Revising Critical Judgments of *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*." 40.2 (2006): 257-270.

Clark, Keith. "Que(e)rying the Prison-House of Black Male Desire: Homosexuality in Ernest Gaines's 'Three Men.'" 40.2 (2006): 239-255.

Gex Breaux, Quo Vadis. "Tom Dent's Role in the Organizational Mentoring of African American Southern Writers: A Memoir." 40.2 (2006): 339-343.

Thomas, Lorenzo. "The Need to Speak: Tom Dent and the Shaping of a Black Aesthetic." 40.2 (2006): 325-338.

Ward, Jerry W., Jr. "The Art of Tom Dent: Notes on Early Evidence." 40.2 (2006): 319-324.

American Literature

Allred, Jeff. "From Eye to We: Richard Wright's *12 Million Black Voices*, Documentary, and Pedagogy." 78.3 (2006): 549-583.

Ernest, John. "The Floating Icon and the Fluid Text: Rereading the *Narrative of Sojourner Truth*." 78.3 (2006): 459-486.

The Faulkner Journal

Atkinson, Ted. "The Ideology of Autonomy: Form and Function in *As I Lay Dying*." 21.1/2 (2005/2006): 15-27.



Fenrick, Michael. "'With Judgment Reserved': Reading Both Predictably and Unpredictably in William Faulkner's *Light in August* and *The Wild Palms*." 21.1/2 (2005/2006): 121-132.

Hagood, Taylor. "Media, Ideology, and the Role of Literature in Pylon." 21.1/2 (2005/2006): 107-119.

Lackey, Micheal. "The Ideological Function of the God-Concept in Faulkner's *Light in August*." 21.1/2 (2005/2006): 66-90.

Lester, Cheryl. "As They Lay Dying: Rural Depopulation and Social Dislocation as a Structure of Feeling." 21.1/2 (2005/2006): 28-50.

Newhouse, Wade. "'Aghast and Uplifted': William Faulkner and the Absence of History." 21.1/2 (2005/2006): 145-165.

Railey, Kevin. "Faulkner and Ideology: Reflections on Critical Subjects." 21.1/2 (2005/2006): 3-13.

Ramsey, D. Matthew. "'All that glitters': Reappraising 'Golden Land.'" 21.1/2 (2005/2006): 51-64.

Skinfill, Mauri. "The American Interior: Identity and Commercial Culture in Faulkner's Late Novels." 21.1/2 (2005/2006): 133-144.

Towner, Theresa M. "Beyond the Old Marshal: 'Patriotic Nonsense,' the Vernacular Cosmopolitan, and Faulkner's Fiction of the Early 1940s." 21.1/2 (2005/2006): 91-106.

The Mississippi Quarterly

- Bak, John. "A Dying Gaul: The Signifying Phallus and Tennessee Williams's 'Three Players of a Summer Game.'" 58.1 (2004): 41-73.
- Benthall, Al. "Worlds of Eye and Ear in the Poems of William Harmon." 58.2 (2005): 277-298.
- Chappell, Fred. "Kelly Cherry in Her Poetry: The Subject as Object." 58.2 (2005): 255-276.
- Clark, Jim. "'Unto all generations of the faithful heart': Donald Davidson, The Vanderbilt Agrarians, and Appalachian Poetry." 58.2 (2005): 299-313.
- Davis, Doris. "The Enigma at the Keyboard: Chopin's Mademoiselle Reisz." 58.1 (2004): 89-104.
- Eddy, Charmaine. "Labor, Economy, and Desire: Rethinking American Nationhood through Yoknapatawpha." 57.4 (2004): 569-592.
- Frankwitz, Andrea K. "Katherine Anne Porter's Miranda Stories: A Commentary on Cultural Ideologies of Gender Identity." 57.3 (2004): 473-488.
- Fulton, Lorie Watkins. "William Faulkner Reprised: Isolation in Toni Morrison's Song of Solomon." 58.1 (2004): 7-24.
- Haake, C. Allen. "Exorcizing Blue Devils: *The Night of the Iguana* as Tennessee Williams's Ultimate Confessional." 58.1 (2004): 105-118.
- Haddox, Thomas F. "'Something Haphazard and Botched': Flannery O'Connor's Critique of the Visual in 'Parker's Back.'" 57.3 (2004): 407-421.
- Hagood, Taylor. "'Prodjickin' or mekin' a present to yo' fam'ly': Rereading Empowerment in Thomas Nelson Page's Frame Narratives." 57.3 (2004): 423-440.
- Heuston, Sean. "Anybody Raised Down Home--Down South: *Brother to Dragons* and Warren's Southern Ethnography." 58.2 (2005): 347-372.
- Higgins, Andrew C. "Reconstructing Rebellion: The Politics of Narrative in the Confederate Memoir." 58.1 (2004): 119-139.
- Kachuba, John B., "Breadcrumb Trails and Spider Webs: Form in *Yonder Stands Your Orphan*." 58.1 (2004): 75-87.
- Kodat, Catherine Gunther. "Posting Yoknapatawpha." 57.4 (2004): 593-618.
- MacKethan, Lucinda. "'Trying to Make Contact': 'Mortmain' as Pre-text for Robert Penn Warren's *Portrait of a Father*." 58.2 (2005): 373-386.
- McFee, Michael. "Seven Questions about Southern Poetry." 58.2 (2005): 217-253.
- McHaney, Thomas L. "First Is Jefferson: Faulkner Shapes His Domain." 57.4 (2004): 511-534.
- Murphy, Jim. "Recognizing the Step: Rodney Jones and the Southern Speaking Poem." 57.3 (2004): 389-406.
- Nadal, Marita. "Variations on the Grotesque: From Poe's 'The Black Cat' to Oates's 'The White Cat.'" 57.3 (2004): 455-471.
- Potts, James. "McCarthy, Mac Airt and Mythology: *Suttree* and the Irish King." 58.1 (2004): 25-39.
- Smith, Dina. "Cultural Studies' Misfit: White Trash Studies." 57.3 (2004): 441-454.



The Mississippi Quarterly (continued)

Spillers, Hortense J. "Topographical Topics: Faulknerian Space." 57.4 (2004): 535-568.

Stein, Allein. "Kate Chopin's 'A Pair of Silk Stockings': The Marital Burden and the Lure of Consumerism." 57.3 (2004): 357-368.

Taylor, Art. "Magical Realism and the Mississippi Delta." 57.3 (2004): 441-454.

Turner, Daniel Cross. "New Fugitives: Contemporary Poets of Countermemory and the Futures of Southern Poetry." 58.2 (2005): 315-345.

Underwood, Thomas A. "A Visit With Walker Percy: An Interview and a Recollection." 58.1 (2004): 141-159.

Urgo, Joseph R. "The Yoknapatawpha Project: The Map of a Deeper Existence." 57.4 (2004): 639-655.

Zeitlin, Michael. "The Uncanny and the Opaque in Yoknapatawpha and Beyond." 57.4 (2004): 619-637.

The Southern Literary Journal

Beyers, Chris. "Race, Power, and Sociability in Alexander Hamilton's *Records of the Tuesday Club*." 38.1 (2005): 21-42.

Clabough, Casey. "Speaking the Past: The Short Fiction of Gayl Jones." 38.2 (2006): 74-96.

Fulton, Lorie Watkins. "Intruder in the Past." 38.2 (2006): 64-73.

Johnson, Mark. "The Dangerous Poems of Dave Smith." 38.1 (2005): 91-114.

Kennedy, Tanya Anne. "The Secret Properties of Southern Regionalism: Gender and Agrarianism in Glasgow's *Barren Ground*." 38.2 (2006): 40-63.

Lancaster, Sonya. "Too Many Cooks: Contested Authority in the Kitchen." 38.2 (2006): 113-130.

LeRoy-Frazier, Jill. "Saving Southern History in Caroline Gordon's *Penhally*." 38.1 (2005): 62-75.

McCammack, Brian. "Competence, Power, and the Nostalgic Romance of Piloting in Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*." 38.2 (2006): 1-18.

Millichap, Joseph. "Eudora Welty's Personal Epic: Autobiography, Art, and Classical Myth." 38.1 (2005): 76-90.

Moore, Geneva Cobb. "A Freudian Reading of Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*." 38.1 (2005): 3-20.

Ortiz-Monasterio, Ignacio. "Jean Toomer's 'Kabnis' and the Language of Dreams." 38.2 (2006): 19-39.

Piacentino, Ed. "Second Chances: Patterns of Failure and Redemption in Tim Gautreaux's *Same Place, Same Things*." 38.1 (2005): 115-133.

Tebbetts, Terrell L. "Disinterring Daddy: *Family Linen*'s Reply to *As I Lay Dying*." 38.2 (2006): 97-112.

Tyrer, Pat. "'A Bird Alive in a Snake's Body': The New Woman of Evelyn Scott's *The Narrow House*." 38.1 (2005): 43-61.

The Southern Review

Clark, William Bedford. "Simpson the Texan." 42.2 (2006): 279-284.

Olney, James. "Of Lewis P. Simpson and Michel de Montaigne." 42.2 (2006): 263-272.

Prenshaw, Peggy Whitman. "Lewis P. Simpson and the Literary Vocation." 42.2 (2006): 273-278.

MEMBERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Ed Piacentino of High Point University in North Carolina has recently edited a book, *The Enduring Legacy of Old Southwest Humor*, published by Louisiana State University Press (January 2006). The collection of essays written expressly for this book comprise the first study to explore exclusively the intersections between antebellum southern humor and modern to contemporary southern literature and popular culture. While some of the essays—those on Faulkner, Erskine Caldwell, Flannery O'Connor, Welty, and Crews—treat writers whose work has sometimes heretofore been examined in the context of Old Southwest humor, the essays on Woody Guthrie, William Price Fox, Fred Chappell, Barry Hannah, Cormac McCarthy, and African American writers (Zora Neale Hurston, Ralph Ellison, Alice Walker, Ismael Reed, and Yusef Komunyakaa) are the first extensive treatment of this connection. The book also explores the legacy of Old Southwest humor to popular culture forms, including The Beverly Hillbillies, Li'l Abner, stand-up comics—Andy Griffith, Dave Gardner, Justin Wilson, Jerry Clower, and Jeff Foxworthy—and southern humor on the Internet, the latter being the first such scholarly examination of this subject. In addition the book is framed with an introduction that explores Old Southwest humor as an intertext and a checklist of scholarship on southern humor. Piacentino contributed his own writing to the collection: an essay titled “From Tap Root to Branch: The Humor of William Price Fox.”

Other works published in 2006 by Ed Piacentino include a review essay, titled “Challenging the Canon: Other Southern Literary Lives,” in the *Southern Literary Journal* (38.2); *Wakeful Anguish: A Literary Biography of William Humphrey*, by Ashby Bland Crowder; and *T.S. Stribling: A Life of the Tennessee Novelist*, by Kenneth W. Vickers. Piacentino's essay, “Petrarchan Echoes and Petrarchianism in Poe's ‘Ligeia,’” can be found in *Masques, Mysteries, and Mastodons: A Poe Miscellany*, edited by Benjamin F. Fisher.

Post-Bellum, Pre-Harlem: African American Literature and Culture, 1877-1919, edited by **Barbara McCaskill** and **Caroline Gebhard**, and published by New York University Press (2006) treats the years between the collapse of Reconstruction and the end of World War I that mark a pivotal moment in African American cultural production. Christened the “Post-Bellum-Pre-Harlem” era by the novelist Charles Chesnutt, these years look back to the antislavery movement and forward to the artistic flowering and racial self-consciousness of the Harlem Renaissance.

Post-Bellum, Pre-Harlem offers fresh perspectives on the literary and cultural achievements of African American men and women during this critically neglected, though vitally important, period of our nation's past. Using a wide range of disciplinary approaches, the sixteen scholars gathered here offer both a reappraisal and celebration of African American cultural production during these influential decades. Alongside discussions of political and artistic icons such as Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, Henry Ossawa Tanner, and James Weldon Johnson are essays revaluing figures such as the writers Paul and Alice Dunbar-Nelson, the New England painter Edward Mitchell Bannister, and Georgia-based activists Lucy Craft Laney and Emmanuel King Love. Contributors explore an array of forms from fine art to anti-lynching drama, from sermons to ragtime and blues, and from dialect pieces and early black musical theater to serious fiction. Contributors include: Frances Smith Foster, Carla L. Peterson, Gwendolyn DuBois Shaw, Audrey Thomas McCluskey, Barbara Ryan, Robert M. Dowling, Barbara A. Baker, Paula Bernat Bennett, Philip J. Kowalski, Nikki L. Brown, Koritha A. Mitchell, Margaret Crumpton Winter, Rhonda Reymond, and Andrew J. Scheiber.

Barbara McCaskill is the General Sandy Beaver teaching professor and associate professor at the University of Georgia. Caroline Gebhard is associate professor of English at Tuskegee University.

MEMBERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT (continued)

David Madden is the Donald and Velvia Crumbley Professor of Creative Writing at Louisiana State University. He has published award-winning fiction, poetry, plays, critical works, and essays on a wide variety of subjects, ranging from history to popular culture. His recent collection, *Touching the Web of Southern Writers* (University of Tennessee Press 2006), includes essays on various other southern writers and Madden's struggle to come to terms with how the works and lives of these writers have influenced his own work and life. *Touching the Web* brings together essays on Faulkner, Warren, McCullers, Wolfe, Agee, and a new essay on Evelyn Scott. More than a collection of criticism, the book explores, in overlapping, far-reaching ways, how influence works its way through the southern literary tradition.

A revised edition of *A Primer of the Novel* (The Scarecrow Press 2006) also ranks among the accomplishments of David Madden. In this edition, Madden, Charles Bane, and Sean Flory have produced an updated work intended for a general readership, including writers, teachers, and students who are just being introduced to the genre. Originally published 25 years ago, this handbook provides a definition and history of the novel, a description of early narratives, and a discussion of critical approaches to the literary form. The revised edition cites several types of novels that did not appear in the original edition, such as the graphic novel and the novel of Magical Realism. The handbook may be a valuable resource for students, teachers, and libraries, in addition to being suited for literature and creative writing courses.

A work about Madden, rather than by Madden, was also released in 2006: *David Madden: A Writer for All Genres* (University of Tennessee Press). This first full-length critical collection devoted to the whole of Madden's oeuvre makes the case that the attention paid to Madden's novels has overshadowed his innovative work as a critic, poet, short-story writer, and dramatist. Co-editors Randy Hendricks and James A. Perkins have assembled eight essays on Madden by writers including George Garrett, James H. Justus, Jeffrey J. Folks, Randy Hendricks, Allen Wier, William Schafer, Aimee Berger, and James Perkins.

On Harper Lee: Essays & Reflections (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, March 2007), edited by **Alice Petry**, will be the first collection of completely original essays on Lee and her only novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The contributors include John Carlos Rowe (University of California at Irvine), who discusses economic issues in "Mockingbird"; Robert Butler (Canisius College), who examines the novel as religious allegory; Jean Frantz Blackall (Cornell University) who traces the parallels between Lee's novel and those of Jane Austen; Jacqueline Tavernier-Courbin (University of Ottawa), who looks at Lee's handling of humor; Laura Fine (Clark Atlanta University), who discusses the similarities between *To Kill a Mockingbird* and the lesbian coming-of-age novel; and Lesley Marx (University of Cape Town), who traces the novel's reception in her native South Africa. Also included in *On Harper Lee* are personal essays by Doris Betts, Gerald Early, and Nichelle Tramble, as well as a full introduction and an essay on Lee as a "One-Hit Wonder" by Editor Alice Hall Petry of Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

Shadowing Ralph Ellison by **John S. Wright** profiles Ellison's intellectual career as novelist, cultural critic, and man of letters. The book introduces new information garnered from interviews with Ellison's friends and contemporaries, including Albert Murray and Stanley Crouch. Ellison, Wright argues, eschewed orthodoxy in both political and cultural discourse, maintaining that to achieve the highest cultural awareness and the greatest personal integrity, the individual must cultivate forms of thinking and acting that are fluid, improvisational, and vitalistic like the blues and jazz. John S. Wright is associate professor of African American and African studies and English at the University of Minnesota. He co-edited, with Michael S. Harper, *A Ralph Ellison Festival*.

To Become a Member Or Renew Membership:

Print off this form and fill out the following information. Mail this form, with a check for \$10 made out to the Society for the Study of Southern Literature, to Jeff Abernathy, Dean of the College, Professor of English, Augustana College, 639 38th Street, Rock Island, Illinois, 61201.

Name: _____ Affiliation: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

For Inclusion in the Upcoming SSSL Newsletter:

Please mail submissions to:

Dr. Robert Brinkmeyer, SSSLN Editor
Department of English, University of Arkansas
333 Kimpel Hall, Fayetteville, AR 72701



Or E-mail to: [sssl@uark.edu]

DEADLINE FOR SPRING 2007 ISSUE: April 10, 2007

Please include your name and affiliation. Submit information in any of the following categories.

- News items from SSSL president, officers, panel organizers
- Books or articles published recently (please provide complete citation)
- Teaching Southern literature—special notices
- Requests for information
- Awards or other distinctions
- Calls for papers
- News of graduate studies
- Other items of interest to SSSL members

If you are organizing a panel for upcoming conferences/symposia, please provide complete information.