

The Most Southern Place on Earth:

Music, Culture, and History in the Mississippi Delta

Presented By
The Delta Center
for Culture & Learning

With Support From



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

Portfolio By
Brady Gilliam
Amy Kramer

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Itinerary

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|----|--|
| 3 | Program Itinerary |
| 4 | Director's Note |
| 6 | Opening Reception |
| 8 | Monday, Day 1 The River, Creator and Destroyer of the Delta |
| 14 | Tuesday, Day 2 Immigrant Stories: The Delta's Ethnic Heritage |
| 20 | Wednesday, Day 3 The Blues: American Roots Music and the Culture that Produced it |
| 25 | Thursday, Day 4 The Story of Emmett Till |
| 31 | Friday, Day 5 The Civil Rights Movement |
| 36 | Saturday, Day 6 The Delta in Diaspora |
| 40 | Participant Yearbook |
| 42 | Staff |
| 44 | Evaluations |
| 46 | Resource Links |
| 47 | Special Thanks |

| Day | Time | Event | Location |
|------------------|-------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Sunday, Day 0 | 4:00PM - 6:30PM | Opening Reception | Railroad Museum |
| Monday, Day 1 | 8:00AM - 12:00PM | Workshop Introduction | Classroom |
| | 12:00PM - 1:00PM | Lunch | Senator's Place |
| | 1:00PM - 2:30PM | Documentary: <i>LaLee's Kin</i> | Classroom |
| | 2:30PM - 4:00PM | Discussion with Reggie Barnes | Classroom |
| | 4:00PM - 5:30PM | "Fatal Flood" film | Bus |
| | | Levee Break Site | Mounds Landing |
| | 6:00PM - 7:00PM | Catfish Supper | Blue Levee Restaurant |
| Tuesday, Day 2 | 8:00AM - 9:00AM | Bus to Greenville | Bus |
| | 9:00AM - 10:00AM | Discussion of the Delta Chinese with Catherine Tom Wong | Chinese graveyard, Greenville |
| | 10:00AM - 11:00AM | Black graveyard, Holt Collier's grave | Greenville |
| | 11:00AM - 12:00PM | Discussion of the Delta Jews | Hebrew Union Temple, Greenville |
| | 12:00PM - 12:30PM | Flood of 1927 Museum | Greenville |
| | 3:00PM - 6:00PM | Religious and Cultural History of the Delta, Dr. Charles Reagan Wilson | Classroom |
| | 7:30PM - 9:00PM | The History of the Blues: Bill Abel | Classroom |
| Wednesday, Day 3 | 7:30AM - 9:00AM | Dockery Farms - "Birthplace of the Blues" | Dockery Farms |
| | | The Crossroads | Rosedale |
| | 9:00AM - 9:30AM | Fannie Lou Hamer's Gravesite | Ruleville |
| | 9:30AM - 10:00AM | Mobile Classroom Guest Speaker: Dr. Edgar Smith | Bus |
| | 10:00AM - 12:30PM | B.B. King Museum | Indianola |
| | 2:00PM - 5:00PM | The Origin and Evolution of the Blues: Dr. David Evans | Classroom |
| | 7:00PM - 8:30PM | Open Mic Night | Bologna Performing Arts |
| Thursday, Day 4 | 7:30AM - 9:30AM | Driving Tour of Mound Bayou | Mound Bayou |
| | 9:30AM - 10:00AM | Po' Monkey's Lounge | Merigold |
| | 10:30AM - 12:00AM | SNCC, Voter Registration, and Fannie Lou Hamer: Discussion with Charles McLaurin | Classroom |
| | 1:00PM - 2:00PM | Emmett Till Documentary | Bus |
| | 2:00PM - 3:30PM | Panel Discussion of Emmett Till Case | Sumner |
| | 3:30PM - 5:00PM | Bus to Important Sites from Emmett Till Story: Bryant's Grocery, Clinton Melton Marker | Bus |
| | 5:00PM - 6:00PM | Emmett Till Intrepid Center | Glendora |
| | 6:00PM - 6:30PM | Robert Johnson's Gravesite | Little Zion Church |
| Friday, Day 5 | 7:30AM - 10:00AM | Bus to Memphis, Clarksdale Greyhound Station | Bus, Clarksdale |
| | 10:00AM - 11:00AM | Cotton Museum | Memphis |
| | 11:00AM - 12:00PM | Stax Museum of American Soul Music | Memphis |
| | 12:00PM - 1:00PM | Lunch at the Four Way Grill | Memphis |
| | 1:00PM - 4:00PM | National Civil Rights Museum | Memphis |
| | 4:00PM - 5:30PM | Peabody Hotel | Memphis |
| Saturday, Day 6 | 9:00AM - 10:30AM | The Delta in Diaspora: Dr. John Strait | Classroom |
| | 10:30AM - 11:00AM | Taste of the Day, Guest Teacher: Dianna Brown | Classroom |
| | 12:00PM - 2:30PM | "Make your own Mojo" and Closing Remarks | Classroom |

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Dear Colleague,*

The Mississippi Delta is simultaneously a unique place and a place that has influenced the American story like no other. This paradox is summed up in two simple statements. Historian James Cobb has described the Delta as “The most Southern place on earth.” At the same time, the National Park Service has said, “Much of what is profoundly American - what people love about America - has come from the Delta, which is often called ‘the cradle of American culture.’”

This is the Mississippi Delta: a place of paradox and contrast, a place described by Will Campbell as being “of mean poverty and garish opulence.” A place that has produced great authors yet continues to suffer from illiteracy. A place that has produced great wealth for a few but persistent poverty for many. A place of privilege for some and disadvantage for others. A place that has produced powerful political leaders, both for and against segregation. A place in which apartheid has been replaced by empowerment. A place of unquestioned artistic creativity that has given the world both the Blues and rock ‘n’ roll, and is also home to Charley Pride, Conway Twitty, Bobby Gentry, Sam Cooke, Mose Allison, and B. B. King. This is the Mississippi Delta, a microcosm of America, the most American place on earth.

The Delta has played an enormous and much undervalued role in the American story. It has given the world much in terms of music, literature, journalism, political action, foodways, and even sports heroes. It is the ancestral home of many Americans who today live in metropolitan areas like Detroit or Chicago or Oakland. It has played an important role in changing America’s attitude towards human and civil rights. At the same time, many Americans do not really know where the Mississippi Delta is, and places far from the Delta now claim its rightful title to being the “birthplace of the Blues.”

The National Endowment for the Humanities has made it possible for you to explore the Mississippi Delta. You will learn the stories that have given this place such a unique flavor, a mystique unlike any other place on earth.

You will learn about Charley Patton, the Father of the Delta Blues, and Robert Johnson, who may or may not have sold his soul to the devil in return for guitar virtuosity. You will learn about Senator James O. Eastland, powerful advocate for segregation, and Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, sharecropper and equally powerful advocate for integration, who lived five miles from each other in totally different and separate worlds that were entirely co-dependent on one another.



You will learn the tragic story of fourteen year old Emmett Till, and how his lynching sparked the Civil Rights Movement. You will learn the stories of Mound Bayou, founded by former slaves as an all-black enclave, and called by President Teddy Roosevelt, “The Jewel of the Delta.” You will learn how the Mississippi River created the Delta and how the Great Flood of 1927 destroyed it. You will learn about how waves of Russian Jews, French, German, Lebanese, Italian, and Chinese immigrants came to the Delta. You will learn about the clearing of the wilderness, the arrival of railroads, cotton, plantations, sharecropping, small towns, the Blues and Gospel, and the Great Migration to the North, East, and West.

Most importantly, you will learn about sense of place as you study the place itself as a text. We will learn history where it happened as we move across the Delta, stopping at sites that tell stories. We will read what has been called “the invisible landscape,” the hidden landscape of stories from the past, as we learn about events that transpired in particular places and how they changed America.

While doing these things, you will also have the opportunity to taste

Delta food, from fried catfish and okra and barbecue to fried dill pickles and maybe even Kool-Aid pickles if you are bold enough. And of course, you will listen to the music of the Delta, the Blues of Muddy Waters, Howlin’ Wolf, Son House, Charley Patton, and Willie Brown, and also the music of Ike Turner, Eric Clapton, and Led Zeppelin, among others.

You will also learn from the Delta’s landscape, the vast sweep of flat, fertile ground that continues today to produce an agricultural bounty, formerly based on cotton, and now based on corn, soybeans, and rice.

You will also have the opportunity to visit some of our nation’s great museums, including the National Civil Rights Museum, the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, and the B.B. King Museum.

Finally, you will work with your colleagues to discover how other places, including your own, can be read as texts, and how you can return to your own place to teach others how to read their place as text.

By the end of the workshop, you will understand how the Mississippi Delta can be both “the most Southern place

on earth,” and “the cradle of American culture.” If you are like most people, you will return home with stories that you will tell your classes for the rest of your life. And you will gain new respect for the power and the poetics of place.

Let me end with some information about the Delta Center and workshops. We were funded through the NEH Landmarks program in 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2013, and you may find portfolios for all of these workshops on the Delta Center website. You can also see the outline of our workshop on the music and musicians of Mississippi, and the syllabus for a class we offer Delta teachers. The Music workshop was funded by NEH through the Mississippi Humanities Council. We have also presented two versions of what we call “The Three R’s of the Mississippi Delta: Roads, Rivers, and Railways,” with support from the National Geographic Society and the Mississippi Geography Alliance, and we often present short workshops for local teachers on various subjects.

Sincerely,
Luther Brown
Director Emeritus
Delta Center for Culture and Learning
Delta State University



OPENING RECEPTION JULY 12, 2015

In the heart of downtown Cleveland, in the Martin and Sue King Railroad Heritage Museum, 37 teachers from across the country gathered for the first time. Over some light refreshments and wine, these teachers introduced themselves, shared stories, spoke with community members and representatives from Delta State University, and got to know each other for nearly two hours. Before long, Dr. Luther Brown (left) thanked everyone for coming and gave a brief introduction to the incredible week that was about to begin.

The reception was made possible by the following sponsors, whom we thank gratefully: The City of Cleveland and the Martin and Sue King Railroad Museum, directed by Lisa Miller; Cheryl Line and the Tourism Committee of the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce; Homer Sledge and the Cleveland Nehi Bottling Company; Robert Heslip and Cecil's Liquor Store; the Parlor Pearlers of Calvary Episcopal Church; Rachel Tate and Gregory Cole; Asa Atkinson and Eddy Causey, railroad engineers and train operators.



Lunch at the Senator's Place 12:00PM-1:00PM

Participants were invited to join Dr. Brown and the workshop staff for lunch at the Senator's Place restaurant, a Cleveland classic. Owned and operated by Mississippi State Senator Willie Simmons and his family, the Senator's Place serves delicious, home-cooked southern food. Participants took advantage of this opportunity to get to know each other better over a tasty meal.

Day 1: The River, Creator and Destroyer of the Delta

Introduction 8:00AM-12:00PM

As participants took their seats, Dr. Luther Brown facilitated a round of introductions. An ecologist by training, Dr. Brown joined the faculty of Delta State University fifteen years ago and founded the Delta Center for Culture and Learning. Located in the heart of the Mississippi Delta, the Center works to promote the heritage and history of the Mississippi Delta through educational initiatives. Following a review of the National Endowment for the Humanities Scholar Agreement and participant expectations list, the group engaged in an ice-breaker activity. Partnering with their neighbors, the participants introduced each other to the group. The morning culminated with a quiz (see right) that highlighted several of the Mississippi Delta's most notable characteristics. Dr. Brown explained that the Delta can be understood as a "magnifying glass" for the United States as a whole, emphasizing that "The Delta is still very much on the national stage."

Where in America?

1. What Southern region was still 90 percent swampy wilderness in 1860?
2. In what Southern region were two-thirds of the members of the 1880 merchant class born outside the United States?
3. What Southern region is called "home" by many citizens in Gary, Detroit, Ypsilanti, Flint, Chicago, Oakland, New York, and other major US cities?
4. In what area did African Americans own two-thirds of the farms in 1900? (It's the same area where tenants operated 92% of all farms in 1910.)
5. What Southern region is widely known as the Birthplace of the Blues (and also gave birth to Rock 'n' Roll)?
6. What Southern region had more lynching than any other in the years between 1870 and 1930 (but in the short period between 1888 and 1901, whites in this area lived in great risk of lynching than did blacks)?
7. In what region did 90 percent of the acreage lie within 5 miles of railroad tracks by 1906?
8. In what Southern region did Chinese immigrants own most of the grocery stores during the 20th century?
9. What region has been called by the National Park Service "The Cradle of American Culture" and by James Cob "The Most Southern Place on Earth?"

Film Viewing of *LaLee's Kin: the Legacy of Cotton* 1:00PM-2:30PM

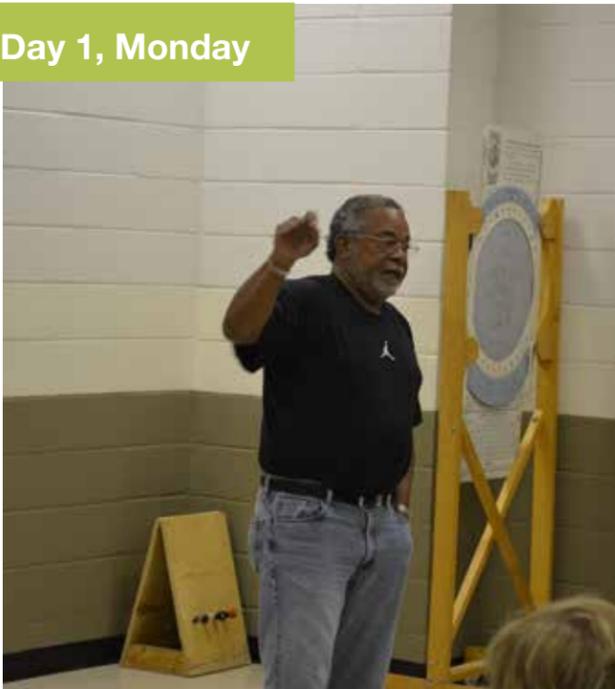
A 2001 Academy Award-nominated documentary, *LaLee's Kin: the Legacy of Cotton* introduced participants to some of the systematic problems in the Mississippi Delta. The film depicts the lifestyle and challenges of those who live in perpetual poverty, as well as the failings and small triumphs of their local education system. The film followed two parallel story lines; the story of LaLee, an illiterate black woman raising her grandchildren and great grandchildren, and the story of Reggie Barnes, contemporary superintendent of the West Tallahatchie county school district. The cyclical poverty of rural communities in the Delta, made plain in the painful details of LaLee's lifestyle and the difficult choices she is forced to make, affects the public education system. Without even pencils or paper, students are unlikely to leave for school in the morning. The poorly-funded public school district in West Tallahatchie county struggles as, under the leadership of Reggie Barnes, it works to raise ITBS test scores. The district faces the threat of probation and state-takeover. High dropout rates, low attendance, high teen pregnancy rates, and high rates of drug use and jail time all threaten educational progress and perpetuate the area's chronic poverty.

The film details LaLee's daily struggles. Without running water, she must travel to the local prison to fill up old Clorox bottles with water from a public hose. She narrates how she cooks food with fillers so that she can feed more people with less. Her failed food truck business drains money and resources. Her son is repeatedly imprisoned for drug possession and her granddaughter, who excelled in school, is ultimately forbidden to go to college so that she can help care for the children. Meanwhile, Reggie Barnes narrates his bid as superintendent to raise test scores among an exceptionally challenged student body. These stories come together to illustrate the endless cycle of poverty and the lack of educational opportunities for former sharecroppers living in the Mississippi Delta.



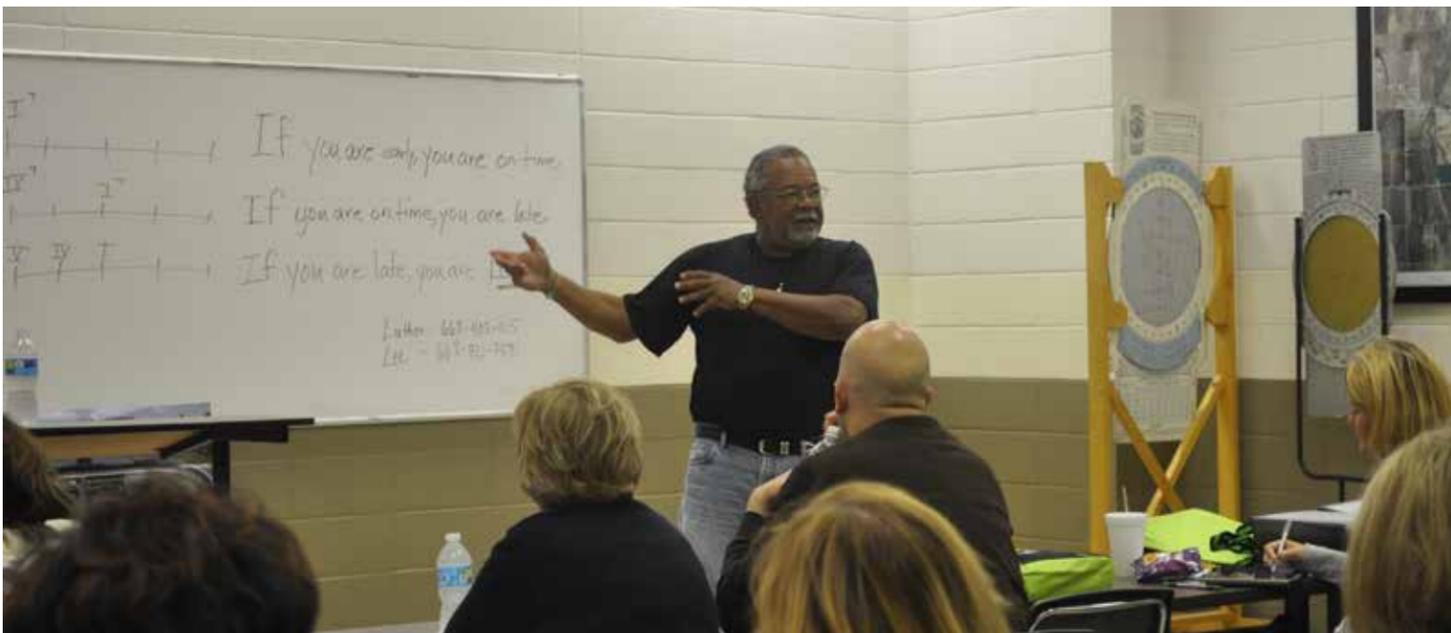
Workshop participants watch *LaLee's Kin*

Discussion led by Reggie Barnes, former Superintendent, West Tallahatchie County School District 2:30PM-4:00PM



Reggie Barnes, Superintendent of Mississippi’s West Tallahatchie County School District from 1994 to 2001 and one of the main subjects of the documentary *LaLee’s Kin*, spoke to workshop participants about the rampant poverty of his former school district and its negative effects on students’ academic success. Barnes illustrated the squalor and indignity faced by his students and colleagues in vivid detail, employing anecdotes from his time as superintendent to explain the injustice of an educational system that compares children raised in poverty with those born into privilege. His discussion also focused strongly on sexual abuse, which he believes is a prevalent but largely unaddressed problem among impoverished Delta communities.

Although Barnes acknowledged that private individuals, government agencies, and nonprofits have donated and continue to donate large amounts of money to Mississippi’s public schools, he lamented his former district’s “mismanagement” and even “waste” of grant money. In his view, systemic poverty and the educational failure it breeds is not only a technical problem but “a way of life,” and cannot be solved solely by (generally ineffective) changes in policy or monetary grants. He asserted to the group that individual teachers must take it upon themselves to encourage and coach their students, demonstrating that someone cares for their success and well-being. “Teachers,” he declared, “can make a difference” by combating students’ “lack of exposure,” promoting self-esteem, and working to help them build a better life for themselves and their families. Furthermore, Barnes criticized the federal government’s attempt to measure academic success in Mississippi using a supposedly “objective” method of testing that remains, in his opinion, devoid of important situational knowledge. “The ITBS,” he asserted, “is prejudiced.” According to Barnes, rural schools entrenched in the region’s history of racism and destitution are unjustly compared with schools in wealthy communities across the United States that enjoy access to far greater resources. This approach is problematic because it portrays schools without context, making it impossible for policymakers and the media to understand the unique set of challenges faced by impoverished educational institutions in West Tallahatchie County and throughout the rest of the rural South.



Welcome to the traveling classroom.

After lunch on Monday, July 13, participants boarded a charter bus for their first immersive trip into the Mississippi Delta. The bus, aptly referred to as “the traveling classroom” by Dr. Brown, provided a dynamic educational experience. Each ride was filled with documentary films, music, and stories about the adventure to come.



Levee Break Site at Mounds Landing, “Fatal Flood” Film 4:00PM-5:30PM

The most destructive river flood and one of the greatest economic catastrophes in United States History, the Flood of 1927 ripped through the region leaving in its path a war zone from Memphis to New Orleans. The estimated damage of the disaster is valued at one-third of the contemporary federal budget. The greatest flooding began when the levee at Mounds Landing broke, causing a cascade of water more than twice the volume of Niagara Falls to pour into the Delta. More than 27,000 square miles, covering a length of nearly 100 miles, was submerged. The Flood of 1927 changed the face of the Mississippi Delta forever, catalyzing the Great Migration north and thus the decline of human agricultural labor in the United States.

On the bus ride to visit the original Mounds Landing levee break site on the private property of the 27 Break Hunting Club, participants watched the documentary “Fatal Flood.” The film depicted the power and influence of the wealthy, planter-class Percy family in juxtaposition to the harsh conditions of black tenant farmers, hundreds of thousands of whom became homeless refugees after the flood. Now only a small grass hill, participants walked along the levee at Mounds Landing and visualized the Great Flood as Dr. Brown narrated its story.



(Top) Participants walk past the levee break site at Mounds Landing towards the MS River. (Center left) The sign of the ‘27 Break Hunting Club, which owns private land on the Mississippi River. (Bottom left) Teachers Julie Sherlock and Ellen Georgi dip their feet in the MS River.



Song of the Day:

“When the Levee Breaks”
by Memphis Minnie and Kansas Joe McCoy

Taste of the Day: Catfish Supper at the Blue Levee 6:00PM-7:00PM

After traveling to the banks of the Mississippi River and standing on the 1927 levee break site at Mounds Landing, workshop participants enjoyed a traditional Delta dinner of fried catfish at the Blue Levee, a soul food restaurant near Rosedale, Mississippi. Also included in the buffet-style meal were “Delta delicacies” such as sweet tea, coleslaw, hush puppies, and potato fries. Dr. Brown explained that Catfish was once one of the Delta’s most well-known culinary exports, and has long been an integral part of Delta cuisine. However, as the catfish market has become part of the global economy, large companies have outsourced their catfish farms to countries where production is cheaper and less strictly-regulated. For this reason, the Mississippi Delta no longer holds its status as one of the world’s largest producers of catfish. Nevertheless, catfish farms still dot the flat Delta landscape.



(Top) Cows graze atop the levee mound at the ‘27 Break Hunting Club (Directly above) Participants arrive at the bank of the flooded MS River. (Bottom left) Teacher Holly Loranger chooses her meal at the Blue Levee’s delicious buffet. (Bottom right) License plates, along with other regional icons, line the walls and ceiling of Blue Levee.



Day 2: Immigrant Stories: The Delta's Ethnic Heritage

Discussion of the Delta Chinese, Visit to Greenville's Chinese Graveyard 9:00AM-10:00AM

Upon their arrival at the Chinese cemetery in Greenville, Mississippi, the participants were greeted by Mrs. Catherine Tom Wong, one of the few remaining descendants of Chinese immigrants in the Delta. Chinese culture, she explained, places a great emphasis on taking care of the elderly and those who have passed on. As Chinese people, like black people, were until recently not allowed to be buried in Greenville's white cemetery, they built their own graveyard outside of town. Wong is now the cemetery's caretaker, organizing its lawn maintenance and making sure its headstones are cared for, adorned with flowers, and cleared of debris and old gifts. She worries that when she dies or leaves the Delta, no one will care for the historic plot of land and it will fall into disrepair. Most members of the once-large Delta Chinese community have left the region, Wong explained. Although all her children except one have left the Delta, Wong herself plans to stay. Her father came to the United States in 1933 and settled to work in the Delta, sending money back to his

family in China and returning to visit every ten years until the family moved to America with him. When asked if she experienced discrimination as a Chinese person growing up in the Delta, Wong replied that although she experienced little in comparison to the generations that came before her, she experienced it nonetheless. Her message was one of hope and forgiveness. Experiencing prejudice firsthand has inspired Wong to treat others with kindness and respect. In a way, she explained, racism even united the Delta Chinese community. Chinese people couldn't socialize among the white or black crowds, so they depended on relationships with other Chinese from all over the Delta. The community consistently met for births, weddings, and funerals, making Greenville's Chinese cemetery an important site in the history of the Delta Chinese. Each gravestone displays both Chinese characters and English words; according to Wong, the Chinese characters reveal more about the deceased than the English.



(Center top) Catherine Wong speaks on the bus about her background and work in the cemetery. (Top right) Catherine Wong leads participants off the bus and into the cemetery, indicating the headstones of her parents. (Directly above) Panel displaying Chinese characters at the cemetery's entrance. (Left) Graves adorned with flowers in the Chinese Cemetery.

Greenville's Black Graveyard, Holt Collier's Grave 10:00AM-10:30AM

Across the road from the Chinese cemetery lies Greenville's old black cemetery. The cemetery holds the grave of Holt Collier (1846-1936), a notable African-American bear hunter and Confederate cavalry soldier. Holt Collier is most well known for leading President Theodore Roosevelt on his famously anti-climactic bear hunt.

In 1902, Mississippi Governor Andrew Longino invited President Roosevelt on a hunting trip through Onward, Mississippi (approximately one hour south of Greenville). To ensure that the President would have no difficulty finding a bear, Holt Collier arranged for a black bear to be cornered and tied to a tree to await the President. Viewing this as extremely unsportsmanlike, President Roosevelt refused to shoot the bear. Courtesy of his press corps, word of Roosevelt's decision spread through newspapers across the country. Political cartoonist Clifford Berryman depicted the scenario, enlarging Roosevelt - the "big game hunter" - and shrinking the black bear to a cute, furry cub. After seeing the cartoon and obtaining permission from the president to use his name, Morris and Rose Michtom, two Brooklyn candy shop owners, began making a stuffed toy bear called "Teddy's Bear." Before long, the 's' was dropped and the Teddy Bear was born.



(Top left) Holt Collier's grave in Greenville's Black Cemetery. It reads that he was a private in the 9th Texas Cavalry in the Confederate States Army. He lived from 1846 to 1936. (Top right) Political cartoon depicting President Teddy Roosevelt refusing to shoot the black bear. This is the cartoon that led to the invention of the Teddy Bear.

Taste of the Day: Kim's fried pork rinds, cracklins, and fortune cookies



(Top left) Kim's fried pork rinds and chicken cracklins. The Kim family immigrated to the Delta from China and owned a local supermarket until they discovered that selling fried pork skins was more profitable. Their pork rinds and cracklins can be found across Mississippi today. (Top right) Lee passes out fortune cookies, representing Chinese-American culture. (Bottom left) Participants view gravestones as they walk through Greenville's Black Cemetery. (Bottom right) Dr. Brown walks with Stuart Rockoff, Director of the MS Humanities Council.



Discussion of the Delta Jews, Visit to Hebrew Union Temple 11:00AM-12:00PM



On the bus, participants viewed the documentary *Delta Jews*, which details the history and experiences of Jewish people in the Mississippi Delta. The film employs a powerful combination

of oral history interviews and academic research in order to combat the widespread understanding of the region as religiously homogeneous and unflinchingly prejudicial. While the film's Jewish interviewees did share stories of discrimination, the prevailing narrative of the Delta Jews is one of acceptance and relative privilege.

Jewish individuals in Mississippi immigrated primarily from Eastern Europe and earned their living at first as traveling peddlers. Eventually, they found a home in the Delta and became store owners, were elected as officials in local government, and attended White schools. Despite the widespread view of Jews as "somewhere between black and white," many Delta Jews came to feel more Southern than Jewish. While Jews across the country were among the first and strongest supporters of the Civil Rights Movement and Jewish store owners in the Delta were among the first to employ African-Americans, many Jews in the Delta felt that the Civil Rights Movement upset the Southern "way of life" and threatened their status as pseudo-white citizens of the Mississippian apartheid state. Fearful of the rising tide of antisemitism spreading across Europe and parts of the United States, most Delta Jews did their best to remain neutral during the early years of the Civil Rights Movement.



Temple Vice President Benji Nelken

Benji Nelken met workshop participants in the beautiful sanctuary for a discussion on the history of his house of worship. The temple once boasted the largest Jewish congregation in all of Mississippi, incorporating nearly two hundred families in 1962. Unfortunately, the story of the Delta Jews is similar to that of the Delta Chinese in that much of what was once a large population has left the region; today, the Hebrew Union congregation has dwindled to fewer than fifty families.

The temple is home to a well-curated museum of Delta Jewish history and culture, which displays a preserved Holocaust Torah among other notable artifacts, documents, and photographs. Beer koozies and shirts for sale bearing the words, "Shalom, y'all!" also caught the attention of workshop participants.



After watching the *Delta Jews* documentary, workshop participants visited one of the Delta's most well-known Jewish synagogues, located in Greenville, MS. The large and beautiful [Hebrew Union Temple](#) was built in 1906 and, like all Jewish temples in the Delta, serves a congregation of Reform Jews.

Flood of 1927 Museum 12:00PM-12:30PM

Just across the street from the Hebrew Union Temple is the Flood of 1927 Museum. The building is located just eight miles south of Stops Landing, where the single largest crevasse in Mississippi River history was created due to the overwhelming flooding in 1927. Collapsing shortly after Mounds Landing, the levee break at Stops Landing was catastrophic for the town of Greenville. Flooding in the lowest areas reached eight to ten feet above rooftops; nearly one million acres was covered by ten feet of water in just ten days. The Flood of 1927 Museum is a small building and is the oldest structure in downtown Greenville. Inside, participants were able to view artifacts from the flood, photographs, and illustrations. An informational video on the flood played in the back of the museum. The Museum helped the Flood of 1927 to come alive for workshop participants, making intimate the event that changed the face of the Mississippi Delta forever and catalyzed the Great Migration North of African-Americans. Following the Flood, vast numbers of sharecroppers lost their jobs or quit, moving to metropoli in the West, Midwest and Northeast.



(Above) Participants leave the Flood of 1927 Museum.



(Above left) Participants watch a film in the Flood of 1927 Museum.



(Above right) Participants in the museum view photos and artifacts from the Great Flood. (Bottom left) Teacher Mashadi Matabane reads about the Great Flood and bluesman Charlie Patton. (Bottom right) Teacher Sarah Anderson examines a map of the Mississippi River and its geographic destruction after the flood.



Guest Scholar: Religious and Cultural History of the Delta Dr. Charles Reagan Wilson 3:00PM-6:00PM

Workshop participants welcomed Dr. Charles Reagan Wilson, Director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, as a workshop guest. Dr. Wilson began his talk with a documentary film by esteemed scholar Dr. William Ferris entitled *Black Delta Religion*, exposing the group to a valuable primary source from which they were able to draw conclusions and questions about the broader religious trends of the Delta region. “The first building built by the Puritans in New England was a church,” Wilson remarked. “In the colonial South, the first building was a tavern.” He highlighted this contrast to emphasize that, contrary to popular belief, the South has never been a bed of staunch Protestant orthodoxy, but has always been a place of rich religious diversity; in fact, the first synagogues in North America were built in Savannah and Charleston. The South was undoubtedly the most diverse region of North America during colonial times, but despite its relative ethnic and religious variation, it cannot be denied that the South was - and still is - a place of Christian, and especially Protestant, dominance. As Wilson stated, “The South is a region that has long taken religion seriously, and the Bible is certainly its central text.”

According to Wilson, the three largest denominations in the Delta have long been the Baptists, the Methodists, and the Presbyterians, the Baptists being the largest of the three. He went on to explain the distinctions between Christian sects, emphasizing the variation among different denominations’ focus on the liturgical, theological, and social-gospel aspects of Christianity. In his view, the dominant evangelical tradition of the South is different from all others, because its primary focus is on the religious experience of the individual. Furthermore, a fundamentalist interpretation of scripture is especially characteristic of Christianity in the South. “The Bible, for Southern churches, exercises tremendous authority,” said Wilson. He postulated that the South’s history of trauma (the rural experience, losing the Civil War, the violence of slavery and Jim Crow) is strongly reflected in its religion. Dr. Wilson continued with an explanation of paper church fans, once used by congregations across the



(Above) Dr. Charles Wilson presents an array of books to workshop participants.

South to keep the heat at bay in sanctuaries that grew stifling during the summer. Church fans, which Wilson passed out among workshop participants, served a double purpose in Southern Christian society: not only did they help churchgoers remain cool, but they also functioned as communication boards where distributors could print advertisements and religious messages. Wilson framed the emblazoned church fan as a symbol of the South’s propensity for “public religion.” It is important to remember that church fans were a biracial phenomenon, common in both the Black and White churches of the twentieth century. Likewise, the concept of “public religion” was also reflected in the African-American Church, in what Wilson called “the sacred world of civil rights activism.” African-American churches were training grounds for civil rights leaders, doubling as community centers where spirituality and activism intermingled and became one. Like the African-American community’s religious culture, its civil rights culture centered around music. The plaintive, longing verses of folk spirituals and popular gospel songs came to transcend their purely religious significance and symbolize the suffering and empowerment of the African-American in a segregated society. Dr. Wilson concluded his talk with a discussion on the prominent civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer, who was well-known for incorporating music into her own anti-segregation and voter registration work with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Participants particularly enjoyed listening to a recording of Reverend Nix’s 1927 sermon “Black Diamond Express to Hell.” Reagan concluded with a discussion on the widespread stereotyping of black American religion as superstitious and disorderly.

Guest Speaker and Artist: The History of the Blues Bill Abel 7:30PM-9:00PM

After he offered a series of book recommendations for the study of the Blues, bluesman and guest speaker Bill Abel told workshop participants with a grave expression, “You know, Howlin’ Wolf killed a man over his wife.” Amidst a chorus of baffled laughter, Abel began to play a Blues number on one of his several guitars, strumming and plucking with the casual expertise of a true musician.

In a voice like gravel, he sang the characteristically unapologetic lyrics to a song he named as one of his favorites. Despite his obvious skill and a substantial knowledge of his subject, Abel maintained an attitude of humility as he explained his own history with the Blues, as well as the history of the Delta Blues itself. “I’m not a Blues scholar,” he confessed to the group. “I’m just a guy who grew up here in the Delta. I learned about the music mostly from a radio show.” Maintaining a candid and forthright approach to his talk, Abel did not shy away from the irony of his position as a bluesman distanced from the roots of his own music. In fact, he pointed out his own privilege as a white man playing music that originated in slavery - a legacy of toil and discrimination in which he holds no share. “I didn’t live the real Blues. You have oppression, pain and suffering that gave birth to that music.” Between songs, Abel stirred up a lively dialogue and guided his audience on an interactive journey through the history of the Delta Blues. Discussing the massive popularity of Blues with an international audience, and especially in Europe, Abel remarked, “It’s a genre of music that’s got a lot of emotion in it, and maybe that’s why it’s so popular around the world... The Blues is truthful and real. It’s a powerful musical form.”



July 14, 2015



(Top right corner) Bill Abel sings a song for participants on one of his many homemade guitars. (Above left) Teacher Jennifer Hunter examines one of Abel’s diddley bows. He uses his phone to produce the metallic Blues slide that Abel demonstrated throughout the evening. (Directly above) Bill Abel brought many instruments for participants to try. (Bottom left) Teacher Casey Gause tries his hand at a cigar box diddley bows



 **Song of the Day:**

“Sail Away”
by Randy Newman

Day 3: The Blues: American Roots Music and the Culture that Produced it

Visit to Dockery Farms 7:30AM-9:00AM

On the ride over, Dr. Brown explained to workshop participants that the decision to expand Highway 8 to four lanes nearly resulted in the destruction of Dockery Farms' historic buildings. At the time, no Mississippi residents objected or petitioned to have the site preserved; in fact, if it hadn't been for a Swedish motorcycle club's protest, the old buildings would have been lost forever. Why did the visiting Swedes protest? They happened to be as enthusiastic about the Blues as they were about their motorcycles, and Dockery Farms is a site central to the history of the Blues. Known as the "birthplace of the Blues," Dockery Farms was home to the great musician Charlie Patton, considered by many to be the "father of the Delta Blues." Upon arrival at the site, Dr. Brown pointed out the cement foundation of the porch on which Patton performed for audiences of sharecroppers, who, like Patton's family, lived and worked on the plantation. Patton grew up on Dockery, learning the Blues from his mentor, Henry Sloan. It was here that Patton himself influenced the great artists who passed through such as Howlin' Wolf, Willie Brown, Tommy Johnson, Eddie "Son" House, and Roebuck "Pops" Staples. Snapping photographs of the old seed house and cotton gin, workshop participants explored the beautiful site, which lies on the fertile banks of the Mississippi River. Participants also learned about the history of Dockery Farms. The plantation was established after the Civil War in 1895 and continues to produce crops today. Dockery was once incredibly massive, spanning a swathe of land twice the size of Manhattan at over 40,000 square acres. The plantation gave rise to its own business town, which included a post office, a doctor's office, several schools, three churches, and even its own currency. Cotton, of course, used to be the farm's main product, but today it grows less expensive crops. In Mississippi and throughout the United States, the cotton industry is disappearing as less expensive production sites are established in other countries.



The Crossroads: Dealing with the Devil



After leaving Dockery Farms, the bus traveled south on the Peavine Highway towards the infamous Crossroads where Robert Johnson, one of the greatest Blues performers of all time, supposedly sold his soul to the Devil. Robert Johnson once had passion but no talent. He dreamed of playing like Charlie Patton and followed Son House and Willie Brown, playing guitar during breaks at their concerts, hoping to learn from them. Legend has it that one day, Robert Johnson suddenly disappeared. When he returned one year later, he dazzled audiences with his new musical talent on the guitar. One listener speculated that the only way Johnson could have become so good so fast would have been to sell his soul to the Devil at the crossroads. Robert Johnson only turned and smiled, which appeared to confirm the tale.



Song of the Day:
"Crossroads Blues"
by Robert Johnson

Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial Garden 9:00AM-9:30AM

In Ruleville, Mississippi, home of the famously outspoken civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer, lies a memorial to an African-American hero. Surrounding her flower-adorned headstone is a garden enclosing a gazebo and a life-sized bronze statue paying tribute to Hamer's loving spirit and her service to the African-American community. At the time of its unveiling in October 2012, the monument was one of only four life-sized statues of African-American women in the United States. Hamer's mission of bringing God's kingdom to Earth by working towards a morally just society in the United States is reflected in her memorial, which bears the inscriptions of various Bible verses and gospel lyrics. The most outstanding of these is taken from her favorite song, and reads: "Let your light shine."

Upon their arrival in Ruleville, Dr. Brown shared Hamer's story with workshop participants, explaining how the segregationist voter registration policies of Mississippi Senator James O. Eastland kept black individuals in the South from becoming active citizens in the democracy of the United States. The wife of a sharecropper and a timekeeper for her home plantation in Ruleville, Hamer was fired from her job when her employer found out she had registered to vote. In response to this injustice, she threw herself into civil rights activism, eventually becoming a distinguished member of the National Freedom Democratic Party and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Hamer attained national fame for speaking in front of millions at the 1964 National Democratic Convention in Atlantic City, spearheading an initially-unsuccessful bid to racially integrate the Democratic Party. Her words "If the Freedom Democratic Party is not seated now, I question America," echoed from radios and televisions throughout the nation before Lyndon B. Johnson, fearing unrest and injury to the public image of his presidential campaign, cut off her speech. Her work eventually led to the integration of the Democratic Party. Hamer is also known for founding the Freedom Farm in Ruleville to combat malnutrition and hunger among impoverished communities in the Delta. Her memorial stands on the land of what was once her beloved Freedom Farm and her grave reads, "I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired."



**Guest Speaker in the Mobile Classroom:
Dr. Edgar Smith
9:30AM-10:00AM**

“I was born in Hollandale, Mississippi, in 1934,” said Dr. Edgar Smith as he began his discussion in the “mobile classroom” as it traveled from Ruleville to the B.B. King Museum in Indianola. Dr. Smith, a Ph.D. in Biochemistry, former Research Associate in Surgery at Harvard Medical School, and the Vice-President Emeritus of Academic Affairs for the University of Massachusetts System, began picking cotton when he was five years old. “I have crawled in cotton fields,” he said of his trying childhood in Jackson, Mississippi. Smith’s supervisor on the farm paid him two dollars for every one-hundred pounds of cotton he picked. When one day the supervisor failed to pay Dr. Smith the correct sum of money, forgetting a nickel, Smith impressed the man by calculating his mistake. From then on, the supervisor asked Smith to count how much he was owed at the end of each day’s work, impressing upon Smith from a young age the value of an education. Recounting his experience attending an outstanding all-black school, Smith told the group, “We had one thing that could not be taken away - teachers. We had excellent teachers. Our textbooks were all used and written in, but our teachers were incredible.” Dr. Smith went on to reveal that he and his wife were personal friends of Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, and passed around a copy of a handwritten thank-you letter that Hamer sent to his family for a charitable donation.

(For full bio, [click here](#))

**B.B. King Museum
10:00AM-12:30PM**

The day continued at the B.B. King Museum, located in the late Bluesman’s hometown of Indianola, Mississippi. Dr. Edgar Smith, the workshop’s guest guide for the day, told participants as they entered the building, “This museum is more than a monument to B.B. King. It tells the story of people struggling in the Delta...He was one of the most decent human beings I’ve ever met.” Before entering the museum’s galleries, participants gathered for a brief film about the history of the Mississippi Delta and B.B. King’s early personal life. In the first section of the museum, the group grew intimately acquainted with B.B. King during his youth, meeting a child and young man bereaved of his mother, forced to make his way in the world as a sharecropper and tractor driver in the Jim Crow South. Guests walked through time as they followed King from obscurity in the Delta to the advent of his career as a musician in the buoyant African-American community of Memphis, Tennessee. They witnessed his rise to fame on the “Chitlin’ circuit” through black-safe areas of the American East, South, and upper Midwest. In the final portions of the museum, workshop participants

experienced King’s uphill battle from musician to superstar in a racist and rapidly-changing world. The galleries ended with a tribute video to the incredible life, talent, and good works of the beloved Blues icon. Outside, workshop participants gathered around B.B. King’s grave to pay their respects. Atop the newly-laid mound of earth stood a violet wreath of flowers and satin, bearing a plaque reading “Riley B. King, 1925-2015.”



**Guest Scholar and Artist: The Origin and Evolution of the Blues: Dr. David Evans
2:00PM-5:00PM**

Upon their return to Cleveland, workshop participants gathered for a creative musical lecture by guest scholar and artist Dr. David Evans of the University of Memphis, who spoke about the history of Blues music. Dr. Evans began his talk by explaining the social-historical context for the emergence of the Blues in the Mississippi Delta: a tumultuous era shaped by the Great Migration, Jim Crow segregation policies, and widespread racial violence and lynching that reached a peak during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Evans argued that a new spirit of individualism emerged among African-Americans during this time period. Individuals were forced to rely on their own selves while the

institutions of the family and the church eroded under sweeping social change. The Blues, he asserted, emerged in African-American music as an individualized response to oppression; the lyrics focus on personal experiences such as romantic relationships, labor, and migration. Evans guided his audience along the Blues’ path through time, using landmark artists and their signature riffs as signposts along the way. He often interchanged speech for singing and playing the guitar or banjo, enthralling workshop participants with famous songs by Blues greats like Robert Johnson, Charley Patton, Tommy Johnson, and Son House, pointing out specific characteristics of each performer’s musical style. Son House, for example, is known

for the intensity and minimalism of his sound, which Evans exemplified by performing his song “Catfish Blues.” Evans then tracked the Blues’ dispersal into cities and its sound’s fragmentation into multiple-person bands. He also highlighted the Blues’ connection with gospel music, as well as the development of crossover genres such as jazz and soul Blues. When a music-savvy participant inquired as to when the characteristic Blues chord progression was first codified, Evans answered that it was probably during the first decade of the twentieth century, when Blues was first emerging as a competitor to the more popular and less edgy ragtime. Evans concluded his talk with a discussion of the differences between the Piedmont and the Delta Blues, clarifying that the Piedmont sound is “busier and more regular.”



Dr. David Evans demonstrates styles and songs on the guitar he spoke about in his lecture.



Evans enjoys the taste of the day - hot tamales - as he mingles with workshop participants.

Taste of the Day: Hot tamales and Lee Aylward's Famous Rum Cake



(Above left) Hot tamales are a Delta food staple and are just one example of how immigrants influenced Delta culture and cuisine. Many believe that hot tamales were brought to Mississippi by Mexican laborers who came over the border to work in the cotton fields. (Above right) Lee Aylward's famous rum cake enthralled participants. A symbol of Delta hospitality, the rum cake is a fabulous addition to family and holiday gatherings.

Day 4: The Story of Emmett Till

Driving Tour of Mound Bayou 7:30AM-9:30AM

On Thursday morning, workshop participants departed Cleveland for a guided bus tour of Mound Bayou, the oldest all-Black town in the United States. Modeled after the Utopian theories of social reformer Robert Owen, Mound Bayou was founded in 1887 by Isaiah Montgomery (1847-1924).

Montgomery, the town's first mayor, was an ex-slave of the Davis Bend plantation, owned by Joseph Davis, the brother of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America. Mound Bayou grew into a flourishing, self-segregated community whose African-American residents enjoyed a degree of freedom impossible in the wider white-dominated society of Mississippi.

However, the town experienced a severe economic decline in the 1920s and 1930s. Falling cotton prices, in addition to the construction of a new, straighter highway that eschewed its previous route through Mound Bayou and thereby drove away commerce, resulted in the closure of many businesses. A massive fire further devastated the town's businesses and homes in the 1930s.

Mound Bayou experienced an economic revival in 1942, when a black fraternal organization called the International Order of Twelve Knights and Daughters of Tabor built the state-of-the-art Taborian Hospital. Staffed exclusively by Black doctors and nurses, the hospital provided affordable medical care to a vast number of previously neglected African-Americans in the Delta. Unfortunately, Taborian was taken over by the government in 1967 after long-term financial troubles, resulting in its closing in 1983.

On the way out of Mound Bayou, the mobile classroom passed by Saint Gabriel's Mercy Center, a charitable community center run by Catholic nuns that serves Mound Bayou's most underprivileged citizens. Today, Mound Bayou remains demographically close to its roots: 98.6% of its residents are African-American.



(Top) Mound Bayou welcome sign that reads "The Oldest U.S. All Black Municipality." (Middle) Taborian Hospital entrance as viewed from the bus. (Bottom) The I.T. Montgomery Home, once restored but now deteriorating, is one of Mound Bayou's historical landmarks.



Day 3 Highlights





Po' Monkey's Lounge
9:30AM, 9:30PM

Photo by: Benjamin Schmitt

On the way back to Cleveland, the “mobile classroom” made a stop at Po’ Monkey’s Lounge, widely regarded as the last rural jook joint in the Delta. “Jook joints,” Dr. Brown explained, are small bars that originated as a form of entertainment for the Black sharecropper communities of the agrarian South. Traditionally based in tiny sharecropper shacks, jook joints came into being as a response to sharecroppers’ inability to gain transportation from the farms on which they lived into town centers, limiting their opportunities for nighttime entertainment and assembly. In a bid to carve out public gathering space for the sharecropper community, particularly hospitable sharecroppers would, on one or two nights each week, open their home to the public. Sharecroppers could thereby spend an evening drinking together, talking, and listening to live Blues music. Today, Po’ Monkey’s Lounge is ranked by the Guardian as one of the top ten places to listen to live music in the entire world. Po’ Monkey himself is the longtime owner and full-time resident of his lounge - which is also, of course, his home. Po’ Monkey, also called Mr. William Seaberry, is known for his multicolored suits and wicked sense of humor. (The word “jook” is thought to have originated from the Bambara term “jugu,” indicating a naughty or wicked individual.) As workshop participants filed out of the bus, Mr. Seaberry arrived in his tractor to greet them. Though his lounge is internationally famous, Mr. Seaberry remains a hardworking employee of the farm on which he grew up. Even on nights when his lounge is open, he can be found tending to his soybean crops during the day. Later that evening, workshop participants returned to Po-Monkey’s to enjoy a night of Delta culture and community bonding.



Po' Monkey arrives in his tractor to greet workshop participants and staff.



(Left) Teacher Sarah Leety smiles in front of Po' Monkey's.



(Right) Teacher Sarah Anderson poses with Monkey and friend.

Guest Speaker: Charles McLaurin
Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, Voter Registration, and Fannie Lou Hamer
10:30AM-12:00PM

Introducing guest speaker Charles McLaurin, Dr. Brown called the prominent Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee activist “a foot soldier for freedom. He’s one of those individuals who made this country a better place.” McLaurin is known for being the SNCC member who helped Fannie Lou Hamer register to vote, driving her to the registration site and preparing her for the Jim Crow “literacy test.” He spoke to workshop participants about his recruitment into the SNCC by famous civil rights advocate Medgar Evers, who bailed McLaurin out of jail after he was arrested for attending a “whites-only” country fair in his childhood home of Jackson, Mississippi. Evers also fostered the working relationship between McLaurin and fellow activist Robert Parris Moses, who he described as small but remarkably brave.



Teacher Ellen Georgi poses with Charles McLaurin and her signed copy of *Stranger at the Gates*

During his time with the SNCC, McLaurin worked primarily in the Mississippi Delta, infiltrating plantations to educate African-Americans about their rights, building communities among the oppressed. “I saw voter registration as the means to ending segregation,” he told the group. “The essence of our democracy is the right to vote...Nobody was listening to us.” Later in his career, McLaurin served as Fannie Lou Hamer’s campaign manager when she ran for Congress in the Mississippi State Democratic Party 1964 Primary. Though Hamer was not elected, the publicity her campaign received served to broaden her activism’s reach. After the discussion, workshop participants gathered around to meet McLaurin, take photographs, and purchase signed copies of *Stranger at the Gates*, whose introduction McLaurin wrote.



(From left to right) Lent Rice, Wheeler Parker, Dale Killinger, Jim Powers, Luther Brown

Participants gathered at the Sumner Courthouse, site of the 1955 trial for the kidnapping and murder of Emmett Till, to hear a panel discussion on the horrific event and its impact on the Civil Rights Movement. The panel of guest speakers included: Dale Killinger, who worked as a case agent for the FBI's 2004 investigation of Till's murder; Lent Rice, an FBI agent who grew up in Sumner and aided in the 2004 investigation; Wheeler Parker, a cousin who traveled with Till on his fateful summer trip from Chicago to Mississippi; and Jim Powers, president emeritus of the American Civil Liberties Union of Mississippi and an active member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

A few days later, he was kidnapped and lynched by Carolyn's husband, Roy Bryant, along with her brother-in-law, J.W. Milam, and at least six other men. After beating and torturing the boy, the men shot him in the head and dumped his body into the Tallahatchie River. The body was found and a murder trial ensued, centered in the town courthouse of Sumner, Mississippi. Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam were tried by an all-white jury and found to be not guilty. However, the two men subsequently confessed to the murder in a widely-read interview with *Look* magazine. According to U.S. double jeopardy law, they could not be tried a second time; no one ever faced punishment for Till's murder.

Many historians view the Emmett Till trial as central to the genesis of the Civil Rights Movement; his mother's decision to display his mangled body in a public, open-casket funeral in Chicago sparked international outrage at the treatment of African-Americans in the United States. In 2004, the FBI reopened the Till investigation to determine who else may have aided Bryant and Milam in committing the

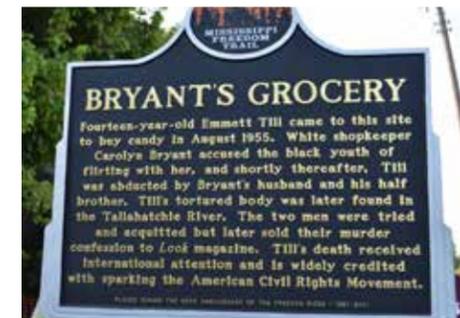
murder. The investigation produced a more detailed account of the crime, but no additional persons were tried or charged. Wheeler Parker left listeners with a message for the future: "don't hate." He explained that the Till case exemplifies just how helpless African-Americans were in the Jim Crow South. He also charged teachers with the responsibility of teaching Till's story to their students, emphasizing the importance of love and respect for one's fellow human beings.

 **Song of the Day:**
"The Death of Emmett Till"
by Bob Dylan



Teacher Tamara Acoba poses with Wheeler Parker

After the panel discussion, participants visited several sites central to the events of the Emmett Till story. The bus first stopped at Bryant's Grocery, where fourteen-year-old Emmett Till whistled at shopkeeper Carolyn Bryant. The building is now in ruinous condition, as it is not being preserved (see directly below, left). The Money community once planted flowers beneath the grocery's Civil Rights Trail marker. The bus also stopped by the site marker of Clinton Melton's murder - another example of racial injustice. Although it took place in 1955, four months after the murder of Emmett Till and just miles down the road, Clinton Melton's murder is relatively unknown. His murderer, Elmer Kimball, who was a friend of J.W. Milam (one of Emmett Till's killers), shot Melton - a black man - for filling up his car with too much gasoline. Mrs. Melton, who was gathering information on her husband's murder, was driven off the road and drowned in a bayou just one week before Kimball's trial. Kimball was tried and acquitted by an all-white jury.



Taste of the Day:
"Koolickles" (Kool-Aid Pickles)



Just outside Bryant's Grocery, participants tasted "Koolickles," a snack typically eaten by children in the Mississippi Delta. Literally Kool-Aid pickles, "koolickles" are made by marinating sliced dill pickles in red Kool-Aid for two weeks. The result: a combination of sweet and sour with a slight crunch that left participants puzzled, yet pleasantly surprised. When shopping at Walmart in Mississippi, pickles and Kool-Aid are often found next to each other in the same aisle.

(Left) Lee Aylward passes out individually-wrapped koolickles to participants outside of Bryant's Grocery. (Right) Teachers Julie Miller, Hilary Frye and Kalea Derrick pose with their koolickles.

Emmett Till Intrepid Center
5:00PM-6:00PM

Following the tour through the sites of the Emmett Till story, workshop participants paid a visit to the Emmett Till Intrepid Center, a memorial museum located in the lower level of an old cotton gin in the town of Glendora, Mississippi. Two enthusiastic docents welcomed the guests, guiding them through the museum after showing a brief introductory video on the Emmett Till trial.

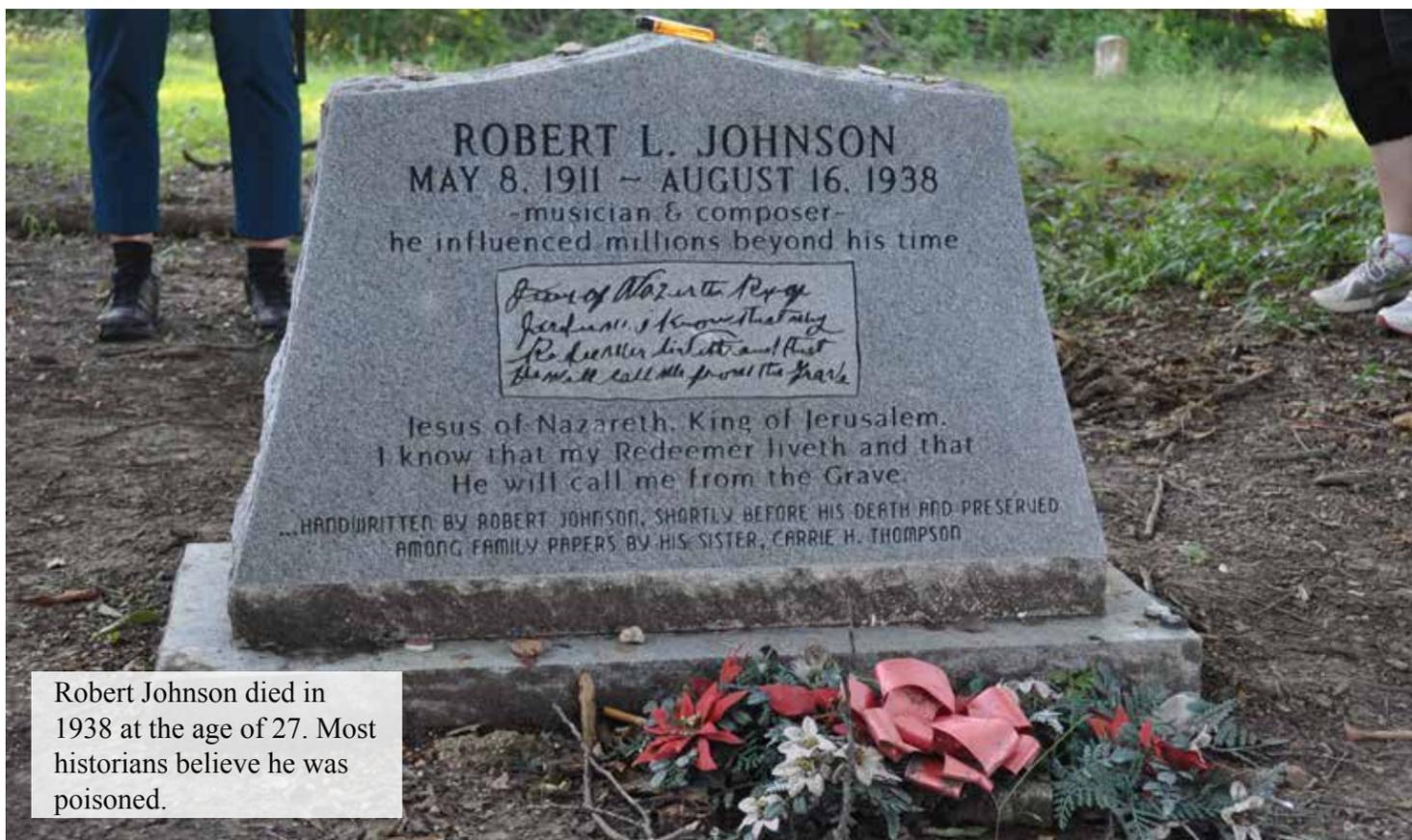
In the Intrepid Center, participants further studied the history and cultural impact of Till's murder, learning about the event as it is viewed by local Mississippians.



Participants in front of the Emmett Till Historical Intrepid Center in Glendora, MS.

Robert Johnson's Gravesite Little Zion Church 6:00PM-6:30PM

In a small copse of trees behind the Little Zion Church in Greenwood, Mississippi, Robert Johnson's grave lies covered in trinkets. An orange cigarette lighter, placed on the headstone by a Blues pilgrim who might have come from anywhere around the world, dominated the clutter of offerings. Although three separate sites have been reported to hold the famous Bluesman's grave, most academics now believe the site at Little Zion to be his true place of rest. According to Dr. Brown, several members of the church's congregation resent that visitors come primarily to visit the grave instead of their church, leaving "litter" that requires constant cleanup. Despite these objections, the Little Zion Church itself has seen its fair share of fame: the building was featured in the 2011 film "The Help," which follows an author during the Civil Rights movement as she attempts to depict the lives of African-American maids working for white families in the Jim Crow South.



Robert Johnson died in 1938 at the age of 27. Most historians believe he was poisoned.

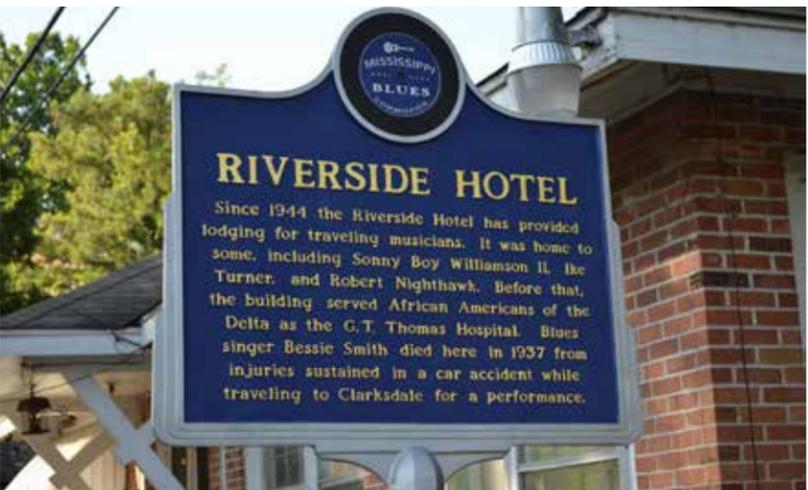
Day 5: The Civil Rights Movement

Bus Ride to Memphis, Stop at the Clarksdale Greyhound Station 7:30AM-10:00AM

On the way to Memphis, workshop participants stopped for a breakfast of donuts and civil rights history at the Greyhound Bus Station in Clarksdale, Mississippi. Inside the station, Dr. Brown pointed out the stark contrast between what were once the separate "white" and "black" waiting areas. The station is now home to a small civil rights museum. Clarksdale Economic Development Coordinator Mac Crank joined us at the Greyhound Bus Station and spoke to participants about the history of race relations and segregation in Clarksdale.



Alongside Dr. Brown, Clarksdale Economic Development Coordinator Mac Crank speaks to participants in the Greyhound Bus Station.



A brief bus tour around Clarksdale gave participants an opportunity to see additional historical markers and important sites in Delta Blues and racial history, including the Riverside Hotel and the Greyhound Bus Station.





(Top left corner) Dr. Luther Brown welcomes workshop participants into the historic Cotton Exchange Building in Memphis, TN. (Directly above) A mural depicting the history of American cotton lines the trading floor's ceiling. In the corner opposite the entrance - the first corner visitors see upon entering - a painting of Abe Lincoln looks sternly over the cotton trading floor. The most important and poignant lines of the Emancipation Proclamation are clearly written and Lincoln is holding the document.



(Bottom row) (Left) Teachers examine a bale of cotton. One bale typically weighs about 500 pounds. (Center) Teacher Sarah Leety engages with the history of cotton. (Right) Workshop documentarian Amy Kramer demonstrates the proper way to carry a sack of cotton. Teachers then "tested their strength" by trying to carry the cotton around the exhibit room.



(Above left) Delta Center Director Dr. Rolando Herts (left) smiles with Calvin J. Turley, Director of the Memphis Cotton Museum and President of Turley Cotton Co. Inc. (Above right) A humorous t-shirt, "hear no weevil, see no weevil, speak no weevil" pokes fun at a very serious problem for cotton farmers. Boll weevils lay their eggs inside cotton bolls and once hatched, the young insects eat their way out, destroying the crop. Several workshop participants purchased shirts like these.



Cotton Museum 10:00AM-11:00AM

The workshop's first Memphis destination was the Cotton Museum, located in the historic building of the Memphis Cotton Exchange, whose trading floor was once frequented by the wealthiest, most elite planters and businessmen in the South. Inside, participants learned about the history of the South's most infamous and costly crop, exploring not only its economic significance but its social and culture significance as well. Many of the museum's exhibits are interactive, incorporating the use of computer technology and tactile pieces to create an immersive and enjoyable guest experience. A section of the museum specifically designed for children's education particularly caught the teachers' attention. A special photography exhibit on William Faulkner was also on display at the time of our visit.



Stax Museum of American Soul Music 11:00AM-12:00PM

A story of talent, respect, and creativity, the history of American soul music is beautifully depicted at the Stax Museum. Participants learned about the evolution of America's music and the artists that came together in redefining popular music during a tumultuous era. A very interactive museum, Stax engaged participants in interactive and beautifully-designed exhibits filled with imagery, quizzes, songs, and artifacts such as costumes and even a car.

In 1960, Jim Stewart and Estelle Axton combined their money, passion, and last names to create the Stax recording studio in Memphis, Tennessee. Before long,

Stax was turning local musicians into superstars. In the 1960s, the new studio had cut records for Otis Redding, Carla Thomas, the Mar-Keys, Booker T and the MGs, Rufus Thomas, and William Bell. The Stax recording studio was integrated from the start. Music transcended racial boundaries; the community of artists collaborated for talent, apparently indifferent to the color of one's skin.

Many of Stax's names and songs spread through Europe before the end of the 1960s, their artists' success relatively unhindered by the color of their skin. After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis, racial tensions peaked; the atmosphere of Stax Records

 **Song of the Day:**
"Green Onions"
by Booker T. and the MG's

changed forever. When Atlantic Records, Stax's distributor, was sold to Warner Bros. in 1967, Warner Bros. refused to return the Stax master tapes after the two parties failed to negotiate a new distribution deal. Citing clauses in the original contract with Atlantic, Warner Bros. left Stax without its most successful recording artists and nearly all of the songs they had recorded. Before long, Stax was forced to close its doors. While the building still houses a few active recording studios, Stax mostly functions as a museum dedicated to the evolution and cultural significance of American soul music. Stax also runs a school for exceptional youth studying jazz, Blues, and soul.



(Left) Tiles outside the old Stax building read "Stax Record Co." (Center and Right) Teachers examine the costumes and record art of various famous Stax artists.

Tastes of the Day: Soul Food, BBQ Lunch at the Four Way Grill 12:00PM-1:00PM

Founded in 1946, the Four Way Grill in Memphis is lunch spot famous both for its soul food and its popularity among historical icons such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Aretha Franklin, B.B. King, and Elvis Presley. Inside, workshop participants were warmly welcomed by the restaurant's current owner, Willie Bates, who moved to Memphis from Shaw, Mississippi when he was young. Bates told the group stories from his childhood, and also explained the Four Way Grill's entanglement in the Civil Rights Movement and its significance to the Memphis African-American community. Participants feasted on a lunch of soul food, choosing from a menu including traditional Delta dishes such as fried catfish, fried chicken, mac n' cheese, collard greens, sweet potatoes, coleslaw, and peach cobbler. The Four Way Grill is also known for its significance as the last restaurant in which Dr. Martin Luther King ate before his assassination at the Lorraine Motel just down the road. On the ride home from Memphis at the end of the day, participants also enjoyed some southern pulled pork from Central barbecue.

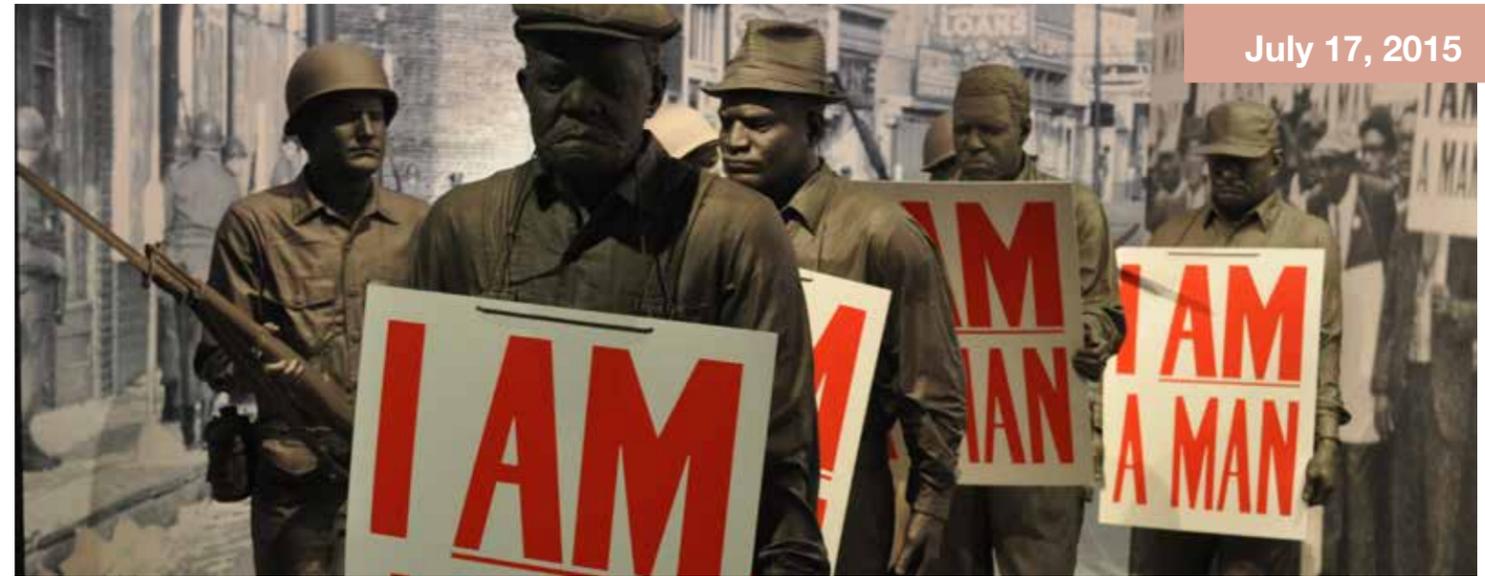


National Civil Rights Museum 1:00PM-4:00PM

Located at the site of Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination in 1968, the National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel proved to be one of the workshop's most emotionally impactful and intellectually stimulating destinations. Participants walked through African-American history, beginning with the slave trade, continuing through the Civil Rights Movement, and ending in our own time. The newly

renovated museum employs life-sized reconstructions and preserved structures, dynamic imagery, interactive exhibits, and eminently readable text in order to convey a sense of empathy along with the factual knowledge it presents. The museum's content is made relevant to guests' own lives through its application to modern-day issues. A few of the numerous subjects covered include slavery in America, Jim Crow

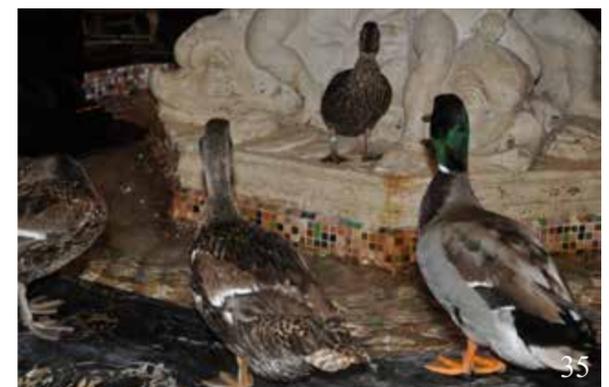
laws, the Montgomery bus boycott, the student sit-ins of the 1960s, the freedom rides, and the Black Power movement. Along the most impactful opportunities presented by the museum is the opportunity to visit both the motel room in which Dr. King was assassinated and the motel room across the street from which James Earl Ray shot Dr. King - both preserved exactly as they were found after the shooting.



(Top, Directly Above Left and Center) Workshop participants experience the Civil Rights Museum's state-of-the-art exhibits, many involving life-size statues and massive prints of Civil Rights-era photographs (Above Right) Participants pose for a photo outside the sign advertising the historic Lorraine Motel.

Peabody Hotel 4:00PM-5:30PM

Workshop participants were stunned by the grandiosity of the famously opulent Peabody Hotel, built in Memphis in 1869. As author and historian David Cohn wrote in 1935, "The Mississippi Delta begins in the lobby of The Peabody Hotel and ends on Catfish Row in Vicksburg. The Peabody is the Paris Ritz, the Cairo Shepherd's, the London Savoy of this section. If you stand near its fountain in the middle of the lobby... Ultimately you will see everybody who is anybody in the Delta." The lobby was, indeed, bustling as participants enjoyed an hour among the marble pillars and gilded chandeliers. However, none of the hotel's spectacles could parallel the procession of the ducks, which has been a Peabody tradition since 1933. The liveried duck-master, holding an ebony cane for ushering the birds, spoke to the gathered crowd about the history of his job. Precisely at 5 P.M., the ducks strutted down a red carpet into the hotel elevator that would take them to their penthouse living quarters. The ducks rested until the following morning when they returned to the lobby fountain precisely at 11 A.M.





The Delta in Diaspora: Dr. John Strait

On Saturday morning, workshop participants met guest scholar Dr. John Strait, professor of Geography at Sam Houston State University in Texas. His talk, entitled *The Delta in Diaspora: There and Back*, covered a wide range of topics, relating diverse cultural, social, and historical phenomena in the United States to the Great Northern Migration. Strait specializes in urban and social-cultural geography, and focused his discussion specifically on the geographies of music and religion, elaborating upon the impact of the cultural exchange between the rural South and the urban North facilitated

by the Great Migration. From 1910 to 1970, around six million African-Americans moved from the agrarian South to large cities in the West, Midwest, and North, namely, Chicago. This massive movement reshaped the cultural and political landscape of the United States, but also emulated a quintessential and commonly-shared American story: that of migration. "What is America?" Dr. Strait asked the group. "It's the story of people migrating." Strait presented the famous bluesman Muddy Waters, who moved from Mississippi to Chicago when he was young, as an example of the diffusion and entanglement of African-American music and politics in the twentieth century United States. In fact, he went so far as to cite Waters as "the voice of the southern diaspora." Strait went on to address an array of background topics, including the "push factors" that spurred the Great Migration, the adaptation of the Blues and gospel music in the North, the "black metropolis," and residential segregation in Chicago. Moving on to discuss the religious influence of the Great Migration, Strait argued that the northern and southern religious traditions both transformed and eventually intermingled in a variety of ways during the twentieth century. He spoke about the broader impacts of the southern diaspora on America's religious traditions, considering the rise in religious diversity, the "revival and diffusion of evangelical Protestantism," the spiritual "southernization" of the American religious public, and the creation of new African-American religious organizations throughout the nation. Strait concluded his talk by explaining the cultural and political impact of the post-diaspora black identity, discussing the murder of Emmett Till and the ensuing Civil Rights Movement, the quest for black empowerment and Soul music as an expression of such, and the nostalgic return to the rural South in northern, African-American music.

Taste of the Day: Fried Chicken and Pound Cake 10:30AM-11:00AM

Participants enjoyed a meal of fried chicken and pound cake - their last taste of the day. Dr. Brown once heard from Mississippi State Senator Willie Simmons that his family used to store fried chicken and pound cake in a shoe box when they went on road trips, both because black people were barred from eating in restaurants and because those foods kept well unrefrigerated. It remains common for gas stations in the Delta to serve fried chicken.



Surprise Gifts and Closing Remarks 12:00PM-2:30PM

After the taste of the day, Dr. Brown shared some personal stories, the most adventurous of which was about a university trip to Gabon on which he collected thousands of spiders for research. Dr. Brown explained that he carries around a miniature gold nugget he was given while in Gabon to remind him of this experience. This story served as a way to explain the purpose of the workshop's next activity - to create a physical reminder that would symbolize participants' experiences, evoking memories and emotions of their stay in the Delta.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Brown thanked the participants for a great week of learning and entreated them to return for a visit - hopefully with their classes. Lee thanked all gathered for their work as educators. Everyone exchanged contact information and said their goodbyes. Before they left, participants surprised Lee and Dr. Brown with a thank you letter signed by all. In turn, Lee and Dr. Brown gifted each participant with a poster photograph of Po' Monkey's, as well as a poster "advertising" the "Most Southern Place" NEH workshop in the traditional Blues concert ad style.



Dr. Brown spoke to the group about different ways they can bring the Delta to their own classrooms. Instructions on how to make diddley bows and other Blues instruments were included inside the workshop binders that all participants received at the beginning of the week. Handmade instruments are a fun way to incorporate Blues history and musical education into the classroom. Dr. Brown also shared a variety of educational resources that are available to teachers through the websites of Mississippi organizations such as the Mississippi Blues Trail and the Mississippi Arts Commission.





**“Make Your Own Mojo:
12:00PM-2:30PM**

The workshop concluded with a mojo-making workshop. The “mojo” is a type of talisman that finds its origins in the folk magic of the Hoodoo spiritual tradition. The magic of the workshop mojos, Dr. Brown explained, is that they help participants to remember their week-long experience in the Delta. Into little squares of black fabric - black to represent the oppressed people of the Delta - participants placed various ingredients from sites they visited and discussions they had during the workshop. They then folded their moos into small sacks and tied them with pieces of blue string, representing that everything in the Delta is wrapped up in the Blues. Each mojo was ornamented with a written label documenting each of its ingredients. Dr. Brown explained that in order to activate a mojo’s magic, its owner has only to explain its ingredients to someone who asks.



(Right) Dr. Brown’s “comeback oil” is a secret liquid that is extremely sticky. Participants used this special ingredient in their mojos to hold all their memories together. The “comeback oil” symbolizes the strong connection they will always have to the Mississippi Delta. Dr. Brown explained that participants may find themselves returning to the Delta with their classes and family.



Mojo-Making Materials:





Tamara Acoba
New York, NY



Colleen Adrion
Brooklyn, NY



Sarah Anderson
Arlington, MA



Mary Browning-Huntington
Mt. Juliet, TN



Marianne Kenney
Denver, CO



Kristan Langton
Shawnee, KS



Sarah Leety
Brentwood, NH



Holly Loranger
Mebane, NC



Deborah Davis
Layton, UT



Kalea Derrick
Brandon, MS



Jennifer Dry
Morrisville, NC



Michelle Fournier
Westminster, MA



Mashadi Matabane
Concord, NH



Julie Miller
Nashville, IN



Nathaniel Pickering
Whittier, CA



Julie Sherlock
Ludington, MI



Hilary Frye
Unionville, IN



Sandra Garner
Mound Bayou, MS



Casey Gause
River Oaks, TX



Ellen Georgi
Adamstown, MD



Gabriel Staino
Longport, MA



Vicki Stinebower
Valparaiso, IN



Karen Waller
Saddle Brook, NJ



Victoria Walsh
Indianapolis, IN



Dana Gilland
Milford, CT



Angelo Girardi
Deltona, FL



Michael Goddard
Lowell, MA



Christopher Hedglin
Hensonville, TN



Sara White
Chicago, IL



David Wilson
Jersey City, NJ



Rebecca Zeren
Portola Valley, CA



Sarah Heiss
Janesville, WI



Jessica Hendrick
Tulsa, OK



Jennifer Hunter
Mesquite, TX



Melissa Kelly
W. Des Moines, IA





Dr. Luther Brown
Workshop Director
Most Southern Place on Earth



Lee Aylward
Program Associate for Education
and Community Outreach



Dr. Rolando Herts
Director of the Delta Center for
Culture and Learning



Heather Kovarcik Miller
Program Associate for Projects



Moira Fair
Graduate Work Study Student



Brady Gilliam
Workshop Documentarian
Robertson Scholar
University of North Carolina



Amy Kramer
Workshop Documentarian
Robertson Scholar
Duke University

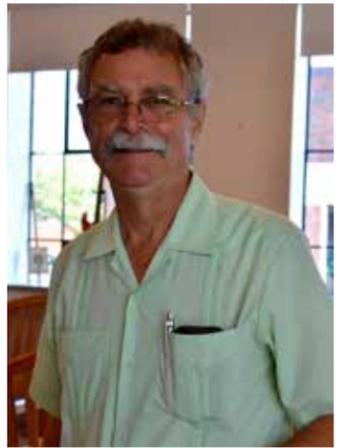
Program Director: Dr. Luther Brown

Dr. Luther Brown was born in central Illinois and spent most of his early life in Elmhurst, Illinois, west of Chicago. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Elmhurst College, and a Masters and PhD from The Ohio State University. He taught at George Mason University in northern Virginia for twenty-three years before moving to Delta State University in 2000.

Dr. Brown was formally trained as an ecologist, and has written two text books in that field. At George Mason University, he was the Director of the Center for Field Studies and a founding member of the New Century College of Integrated Studies for students who wish to explore the connections among the sciences, arts, and humanities. He also directed the Bahamas Environmental Research Center on Andros Island.

In 2000, Dr. Brown became the founding Director of The Delta Center for Culture and Learning and the Associate Dean for Delta Regional Development at Delta State University. In 2011, The Delta Center was chosen as the manager of the newly created Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area, established by the Omnibus Federal Land Management Act of 2009. Dr. Brown was instrumental in the approval oversight process. The Delta Center is also home of the Blues Highway Association, a group of individuals who promote heritage tourism, historic preservation, and the interpretation of Delta culture, especially

through the Blues. Dr. Brown is also a founding member of the Mississippi Blues Commission, past Chairman of the Mississippi Blues Foundation, past Vice Chair of the Mississippi Humanities Council, and an active participant in the growing Mississippi Blues Trail and the Mississippi Blues Foundation's Benevolence activities.



Dr. Brown has published many academic articles and regularly presents at local, regional, and national meetings. He has spoken about the Delta's rich cultural heritage on Good Morning America, Walt Grayson's Mississippi Roads on Mississippi Public Broadcasting, and the History Channel's Mississippi, among others.

Retiring in 2014, Dr. Luther Brown now resides in Florida with his wife, Bonnie. New Delta Center for Culture and Learning Director Dr. Rolando Herts and the rest of the Delta Center staff welcome Dr. Brown back to Mississippi to direct the NEH Most Southern Place workshop in June and July of 2015.

Shirts of every color...

The inspiration for this portfolio's color scheme came from Dr. Brown's guayabera shirts (also known as Mexican or Filipino wedding shirts since they are often considered tropical formal/professional wear suitable for things like weddings or business meetings). Even though the color changed each day, each shirt had the same iconic two vertical rows of pleating or embroidery and four pockets, two on the breast and two on the lower front. These shirts may have long or short sleeves and are traditionally worn un-tucked and not covered by a jacket.

Dr. Brown learned to wear guayabera shirts in the Bahamas, where he spent some time as the Director of the Bahamas Environmental Research Center. They are also commonly worn in the Delta, Caribbean, Latin America, parts of Africa, Asia, India, and especially the Philippines.

"They are my summertime shirt of choice," said Dr. Brown. "I wear them because they are cool, and have lots of pockets." Those pockets are certainly useful when constantly on the move during the NEH workshop.



Evaluations

| Activity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Average |
|--|---|---|----|----|----|---------|
| Reception at Railroad Museum | 1 | 0 | 3 | 16 | 15 | 4.26 |
| Introduction | 0 | 1 | 4 | 10 | 19 | 4.38 |
| Discussion session | 2 | 0 | 4 | 9 | 17 | 4.22 |
| Film: LaLee's Kin: The Legacy of Cotton | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 31 | 4.86 |
| Discussion led by Reggie Barns | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 29 | 4.79 |
| Levee break site/Delta and Pine Land | 0 | 0 | 3 | 14 | 18 | 4.43 |
| Leo's at the Levee (catfish supper) | 0 | 1 | 4 | 12 | 18 | 4.34 |
| Discussion of the Delta Chinese | 0 | 1 | 4 | 18 | 11 | 4.15 |
| Discussion of the Delta Jews | 0 | 1 | 4 | 16 | 14 | 4.23 |
| Greenville's Black graveyard | 1 | 2 | 9 | 11 | 12 | 3.89 |
| Guest Scholar: Dr. Charles Wilson | 0 | 2 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 3.85 |
| Bill Abel, History of the Blues | 0 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 23 | 4.54 |
| Dockery Farms and The Crossroads | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 25 | 4.71 |
| Fanny Lou Hamer's grave site | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 29 | 4.8 |
| B.B. King Museum | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 28 | 4.8 |
| Dr. Edgar Smith | 0 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 25 | 4.6 |
| Guest Speaker: Charles McLaurin | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 32 | 4.91 |
| Open Mic Night | 2 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 3.44 |
| Tour of Mound Bayou | 0 | 2 | 13 | 10 | 9 | 3.76 |
| Dr. David Evans | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 32 | 4.97 |
| Panel discussion of Emmett Till case | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 32 | 4.91 |
| Sumner | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 30 | 4.88 |
| Emmett Till Intrepid Center | 7 | 6 | 6 | 9 | 6 | 3.02 |
| Bryant store, Robert Johnson's gravesite | 0 | 0 | 2 | 12 | 21 | 4.54 |
| Po' Monkey's Lounge | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 31 | 4.86 |
| Bus ride to Memphis | 0 | 1 | 5 | 13 | 15 | 4.24 |
| Stax Museum | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 30 | 4.83 |
| Cotton Museum | 2 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 15 | 4.19 |
| National Civil Rights Museum | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 24 | 4.94 |
| Lobby of the Peabody | 1 | 3 | 7 | 13 | 12 | 3.89 |
| Bus Ride Home (Stax film) | 0 | 1 | 6 | 10 | 18 | 4.29 |
| Guest Scholar: Dr. John B. Strait | 1 | 1 | 7 | 14 | 12 | 4 |
| Making Mojos | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 29 | 4.74 |

See participant evaluation comments on the following page.

The experiences ranged from traditional “lectures,” readings, discussions, travel and listening, to videos...everything we did was carefully designed to help us learn.

The coordinating and logistics were efficient and professional.

Evaluations

I feel the reading was immensely beneficial.

The Till panel at the Sumner Courthouse was life-changing.

You treated us as professionals.

This was an eye-opening experience in so many ways.

The program leaders and volunteers were kind, knowledgeable and fun.

For the love of the humanities and the United States, maintain this workshop in perpetuity!

I very much enjoyed Luther and Lee's dedication to the course, and their ability to organize great activities for a large group of people.

As a New Englander, I could never have “felt” this place without coming here.

I enjoyed getting to see so much of the Delta via our many bus rides.

There's something about being physically in a place and shaking hands with living history that make it come alive.

All of the guest lecturers were so well-prepared, well-versed and well-spoken.

The songs of the day and tastes of the day really helped me to understand [the Delta's] history and culture.

I have taken many classes and workshops, attended many a conference, and this is one of the best educational experiences I have ever had.

Being able to get out of the classroom and actually see the sites, whether the Dockery plantation or the Sumner Courthouse, was extremely valuable.

The documentaries were informative and interesting, and all the museums were stellar!

Visiting where Martin Luther King died was powerful.

You treated us like family.

Luther and Lee were wildly engaging, filled with personal stories that dovetailed with the lectures.

I will share this experience with my educator friends across the country.

I feel very lucky and honored to have participated in this workshop.

I had very high expectations, and they were exceeded.

I know this will make me a better teacher.

I can't get enough of Luther's stories.

I most enjoyed hearing from and meeting eye-witnesses to historic events...Such an honor to be in their presence!

I came for the civil rights history, but the culture, music and food were awesome.



As a part of this workshop, all participants were required to create lesson plans or other reflection materials based on the workshop course content. These materials have been uploaded at the workshop website page:

<http://deltacenterforcultureandlearning.com/neh-workshop/lesson-plans/>

For more information, please visit the Most Southern Place on Earth website:

<http://deltacenterforcultureandlearning.com/southern-place-workshop/>

Or contact the Delta Center for Culture and Learning staff via e-mail:

Dr. Luther Brown: lbrown@deltastate.edu

Dr. Rolando Herts: rherts@deltastate.edu

Mrs. Lee Aylward: l aylward@deltastate.edu

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed on this website do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities



Special Thanks

The National Endowment for the Humanities
Sponsor

Dr. Luther Brown

Program Director, *Most Southern Place On Earth* workshop

Dr. Rolando Herts

Director of the Delta Center for Culture and Learning

Lee Aylward

Program Associate for Education and Community Outreach

Bill Abel
Reggie Barnes
Willie Bates
Dianna Brown
David Evans
Bill Gates
Dale Killinger
Charles McLaurin
Benji Nelken

Wheeler Parker
Ben Powell
Jim Powers
Lent Rice
Edgar Smith
John Strait
Charles Reagan Wilson
Catherine Tom Wong

Guest Speakers

Heather Kovarcik Miller
Program Associate for Projects

Brady Gilliam
Portfolio Author and Documentarian
Robertson Scholar
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Class of 2018

Amy Kramer
Portfolio Author and Documentarian
Robertson Scholar
Duke University, Class of 2018

