

Reflections of An Itinerant Okra

This weeks busy schedule, in classroom or bus,
Has been educational and challenging to us.
From palatial estates like the Grand Tatum Dorm,
Expecting the unexpected became our daily norm.
But once it came lunchtime, and feeding your face,
We all got real serious, at the Senators' Place.

We now understand the flood of two-seven
Resulting migration and those sent to heavens.
The levy that broke, and those that were stranded,
The specters of race, with those that were landed.
Discussions on bus, of soil and soul,
Past acres of cotton, not yet at the boll.

Our knowledge of music, especially the Blues,
Has now been expanded with it's many hues.
From origins with Patton, the Flamboyance of King,
To the humble Bill Abel, and why bluesmen sing.
The spreading of culture, up route 61,
From "E'in till you caint, the path of the sun.

The struggle for justice, the issues of race,
We pause to reflect as we visit each place.
The gravesite of Hamer, the murder of Till,
Too sick and too tired to longer be still.
Their causes emerge from the era of cotton,
The movement remains, their work not forgotten.

The Mississippi Delta, like no other place,
The people so rich with a welcoming grace,
Reached out to us teachers from all over the states,
And molded our group, the July one rights.
Fighting Okra or Statemen, whichever asserts,
We learned what we know from Aylward and Hertz.

So looking back now on our week here at State,
The Most Southern Workshop, was better than great.
Collaboration with peers, perspectives of each,
Will help us improve, as we tarry to teach.
So Dear NEH, it's money well spent,
We and those before, are blessed to have went.

Chad Spencer
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