

Focus on the Humanities

October 2014



(Visit our web site at www.mshumanities.org to learn more about us.)

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Director's Message: Open Minds, Civil Discourse at the Heart of our Mission



Since the World Cup this past summer, I have become obsessed with soccer, or what the rest of the world calls "football." In addition to watching numerous European matches, I've been reading books about the international history of the sport, how the sport reflects national cultures around the world, and even how economic and statistical models can help predict the future performance of national teams. While this new passion has annoyed my wife and daughters, I am quite pleased with it, since after all, I am 45 years old. Advertisers usually write off my demographic as being too set in its ways to try new things, believing that it is best to focus their efforts and money on younger people whose preferences are still being formed. But my new obsession with soccer reassures me that even though I am middle-aged (if I'm lucky), I am not closed off to new

things. My mind is still open.

Recently, I've been reading the book *The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America* by the distinguished historian Gerald Horne which makes the provocative argument that the American Revolution was heavily inspired by a colonial desire to protect slavery in the new world and fears of slave rebellions. It is a fairly radical revision of the traditional version of the Founding Fathers and the revolution. As is the case in academic history, its arguments and evidence will be discussed and challenged through scholarly debate. In truth, the past (or to be less cute, our perception of the past) is always changing as new evidence and arguments are presented.

Keeping an open mind, and being willing to change long-held beliefs when faced with new facts are crucial both to the field of history and to our republican form of government. The Founding Fathers envisioned a republic in which citizens would openly debate the issues of the day, and in which strong arguments and evidence would sway public policy. While we can question whether this vision reflects the reality of today, we should not discount the importance of civil debate and open-mindedness. A political world where responses to policy questions reflect empty slogans or knee-jerk reactions rather than careful thought is not a sign of a healthy republic. We must strive to do better, and this is where the humanities have a role to play.

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As stated in the 2013 report “The Heart of the Matter,” the humanities are the “keeper of the republic” due to their ability to engage citizens in lifelong learning and critical thinking. The humanities inspire us to remain open to the world, its wonders and new insights and discoveries. Since its founding in 1972, the Mississippi Humanities Council has provided learning opportunities to people of all ages across our state. Our mission is to keep minds open to new ideas, to promote dialogue across racial, economic, and social barriers, and to encourage a more civil discourse. Through our grants and many council-conducted programs (as detailed in this newsletter), we educate people about themselves, their state, and their place in the world.

We are a small staff with a small budget, but our impact is much larger. With your help, we can make even more of a difference in Mississippi. Please consider supporting our work with a [donation](#). Together, we can change minds and move Mississippi forward. We thank you for your continued partnership and interest in the Council.

MHC Seeks Nominations for 2015 Humanities Achievement Awards

The Mississippi Humanities Council is now accepting nominations for its 2015 Public Humanities Achievement Awards. These awards, which include the Humanities Scholar Award, the Humanities Partner Award, and the Humanities Educator Award, will be presented at the Humanities Council’s annual awards dinner on February 13, 2015.

Each of the Humanities Achievement Awards are presented to individuals in the state who have shown exemplary dedication to teaching, promoting, and working with the humanities. The Humanities Scholar Award honors one scholar in a traditional humanities field who has participated in Humanities Council programs, serving as an interpreter of his or her discipline to public audiences. The Humanities Partner Award recognizes an individual or organization that has collaborated with MHC to provide programs to the public, thus allowing the Humanities Council to broad its scope and audience. The Humanities Educator Award is presented to an individual whose work



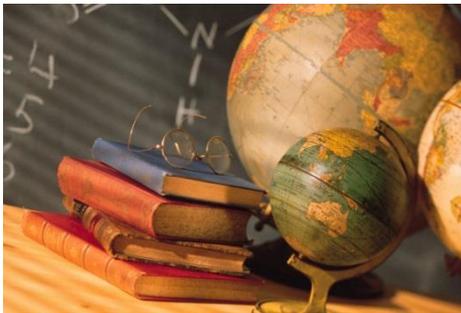
moves beyond the classroom and uses innovative techniques and formats to reach a wide audience with the ideas and techniques of the humanities.

Any citizen of Mississippi who has supported the awareness and appreciation of the Humanities Council and the public humanities is eligible for nomination. Every Mississippian is eligible to make one nomination in each category but may NOT nominate themselves. MHC will select the nominee who best exemplifies each award based on the descriptions above.

The awards will be presented at the Humanities Council's annual awards dinner on February 13, 2015. Each recipient will receive an original piece of artwork from a Mississippi artist.

The nomination deadline for the Humanities Achievement Awards is November 15, 2014. More information about these awards, as well as the nomination forms, can be found on our [website](#).

Humanities Teacher Awards Events throughout October and November



With the arrival of October comes a very busy and exciting two months for the Humanities Council. Every year, October and November are filled with more than thirty different public programs throughout the state that are each funded by the Humanities Council as part of its Humanities Teachers Award program. These awards are aimed at recognizing exemplary humanities teachers at each of the state's colleges and universities.

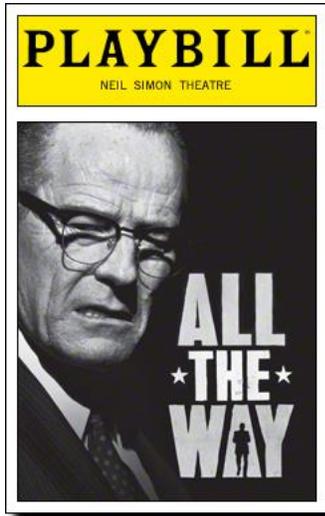
The process begins each August, when the Humanities Council encourages each college and university to select a humanities instructor whom they believe has shown outstanding dedication to teaching a humanities subject. Only the president or academic dean at each institution may nominate a teacher, and once they make their selection, the teacher plans a program based on their field of humanities research to give during October or November that is free and open to the public. In addition to these public programs, the award also includes an honorarium for each recipient that is funded by the Humanities Council. Through its Humanities Teachers Awards, the Humanities Council seeks to adhere to the goals of National Arts and Humanities Month, which is celebrated annually in October, by promoting the continued knowledge of the humanities and celebrating the teachers who help to spread this knowledge in the classroom.

Funding, promoting, and attending 31 different public programs throughout the state in such a short amount of time makes the MHC office abuzz during October and November. We encourage you to get as excited about these programs as we are and find one near you to attend! For the complete list of these free Humanities Teacher Award programs, check out our [website](#).

MHC Supports *America at the Turning Point: Conversations on 'All the Way'*

New Stage Theater is bringing Broadway's most celebrated play of last year to Jackson for its regional premiere October 21 to November 2. "All the Way" tells the story of President Lyndon Johnson during the fateful year of 1964 when he pushed through civil rights legislation, escalated American involvement in Vietnam, and won election in a landslide. Since the play covers the events of Freedom Summer and the effort of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party to be seated at the Democratic Convention in Atlantic

City, New Stage approached the Humanities Council to support a series of public programs in conjunction with the play. America at the Turning Point: Conversations on “All the Way” will explore the themes and events raised by the play in three different programs:



On Tuesday, October 21 at noon in the House of Representatives Chamber at the Old Capitol Museum, Governor William Winter, veterans of the Civil Rights Movement, and moderator Dr. Daphne Chamberlain, Assistant Professor of History at Tougaloo College, will explore the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 that was one of LBJ's greatest achievements.

On Thursday, October 23 at 6:30 pm at New Stage Theatre, Jim Child, New Stage Theatre founding board member; John O'Neal, Free Southern Theater co-founder; Company Members of All The Way; and moderator Carlton Turner, Alternate ROOTS Executive Director will discuss arts and culture in times of struggle and dramatizing politics and history.

On Friday, October 24 at 9 am at Koinonia Coffee House in Jackson, Civil Rights activist Rev. Ed King, who is depicted in the play; Dr. Leslie-Burl McLemore, professor emeritus at Jackson State University; Company

Members of All The Way; and moderator Dr. Daphne Chamberlain will discuss Freedom Summer and its impact on voting rights in America.

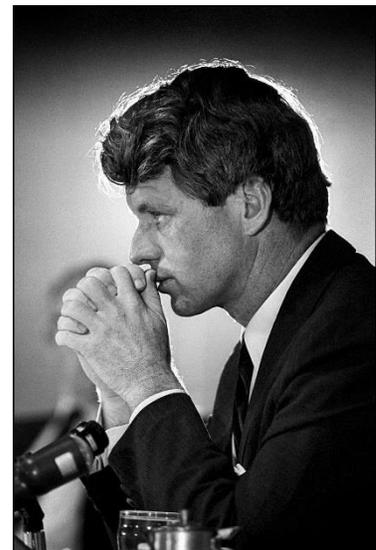
Supported by a grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council, all panel discussions are free and open to the public.

Civil Rights Photography Exhibit Receives Program Support from MHC

Photographs by the late Jim Lucas, a Millsaps College student during the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi, have been mounted and are being exhibited around the state for the first time, with support from the Mississippi Humanities Council.

An outstanding photographer who progressed from carrier boy to photographer and lab man for the local newspaper, Lucas' first photo was published in 1959 when he was 14 years old in the *Jackson Daily News*. He continued to take photographs throughout his years at Murrah High School and Millsaps College. In 1964 the nation was focused on Mississippi and the search for Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney, civil rights workers missing in Neshoba County. Jackson became ground zero for the national press, and Lucas had the opportunity to meet and assist film cameramen from CBS news. He soon became a "stringer" for UPI and *Time* and *Life* magazines. His photographs included local marches, pickets, planning meetings and bombings.

Forty-five of Lucas' photographs are now available for public exhibit. MHC contracted with Civil Rights scholar Dr. Robert Lockett of Jackson



Lucas' photo of Robert Kennedy at the 'War on Poverty' Senate Subcommittee Hearings in Jackson, 1967.

State University to write narrative text panels to accompany the photographs and designed a Gallery Guide to be printed and distributed at each exhibit venue. MHC has designated financial support for up to four showings of the Lucas photo exhibit in Mississippi, including \$500 toward the exhibit fee and \$500 for local humanities programming related to the exhibit. For information about the exhibit, please contact Jane Hearn, who was married to Lucas at the time of his death, at 601-260-1919 or jhearnjax513@gmail.com.

The MHC Speakers Bureau: Elvis, the Blues, Civil Rights and Much More

Have you ever wondered how Cracker Barrel billboards reflect images of American farmers and rural life, how a “hillbilly cat” from Tupelo changed the world or how the Mississippi River has shaped our state and culture? These topics and almost 200 more are available to you through the Mississippi Humanities Council Speaker’s Bureau.

The Speaker’s Bureau features the state’s finest historians, writers and storytellers speaking on a wide variety of subjects related to Mississippi and beyond. The MHC selects speakers based on their credentials and the quality of their program and pays them an honorarium for presenting to nonprofit groups around the state. Any nonprofit organization within the state of Mississippi may apply to host a Speaker’s Bureau member. Application forms are available on the MHC [website](#).

Recent additions to the Speakers Bureau include Flonzie Brown Wright, who helped register thousands of voters in Mississippi during the Civil Rights Movement, who presents a lecture titled *The Mississippi Civil Rights Movement in Contemporary Times*; Ellen Meacham, who teaches in the University of Mississippi’s school of journalism, who traces Robert Kennedy’s visit to the Mississippi Delta during a 1967 Senate Subcommittee hearing in the “War on Poverty,” in a talk titled *Delta Epiphany: RFK in the Mississippi Delta*; and Carolyn Brown, a writer, editor and independent scholar, whose research on Margaret Walker informs her presentation, *Margaret Walker: The Most Famous Person Nobody Knows*.



**Civil Rights activist
Flonzie Brown Wright.**

Family Reading Continue Across the State; New Sites Selected in January



A recent Luciérnagas (bilingual Spanish/English) Family Reading Program at Columbus Public Library.

Four programs which have been ongoing simultaneously beginning in September will all conclude by the end of October. Included are a Family Reading Bonds program at the Itta Bena Library (ending Monday, Oct. 20), a Luciérnagas (bilingual Spanish–English) Family Reading Program at the M.R. Dye Public Library in Horn Lake (ending Wednesday, Oct. 22) and two Prime Time Reading Programs (supported by a grant from Shell Oil via the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities) including one at the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center in Gulfport (ending Thursday, Oct. 9) and the other at the Mary C. O’Keefe Cultural Center in Ocean Springs (ending Thursday, Oct. 23). Site

selections will begin for programs for 2015 beginning this November/December with Shell Oil/LEH assisting with the Prime Time programs. The Mississippi Arts Commission has also supported our reading programs through its grants. A training is also scheduled for January 2015 for storytellers, discussion leaders and site directors for next year's Prime Time programs.

Like Our Page to Help Us Win!



The Florida Humanities Council has challenged each state to a "Facebook Fan" contest to see which state's council can get the most new followers. Help us by becoming fans of MHC and "liking" our page on Facebook and encourage your Mississippi-based or Mississippi-lovin' friends to do the same. Not only will it help us win the contest, but liking our page is a great way to stay up-to-date on humanities content and events happening throughout the state! Click on this [link](#) to get to our Facebook page.

Next MHC Grant Deadline October 15, 2014

Jan. 15, 2015, is the deadline for MHC minigrant proposals for amounts up to \$2,000. Application guidelines and forms are available on the MHC [website](#). Minigrant deadlines are Jan. 15, April 15, July 15 and Oct. 15 each year. Proposals must be emailed or delivered to the MHC offices by 5:00 p.m. on these dates. Programs and expenditures may not occur fewer than eight weeks after the deadline date you selected.

Please note that several updates have been made to the Mississippi Humanities Council Grant Guidelines and to the grant application forms. It is essential that applicants use current forms, available on the MHC [website](#).

Humanities Calendar Offers Impressive Array of Public Programs

The Mississippi Humanities Council website [calendar](#) showcases a stellar array of public humanities programs taking place throughout the state this fall. Highlights include:

- **New Stage Theatre Presents America at the Turning Point: Conversations on 'All the Way'** – Oct. 21, 23, 24
- **Mississippi Museum of Art Presents 'Unburied Treasures: Mildred Nungester Wolfe'** – Oct. 21
- **Philosophical Fridays Return to USM** – Oct. 24
- **Native American Days at Winterville Mounds** – Oct. 29–Nov. 1
- **USM's 'Culinary Communities' Hosts John T. Edge** – Oct. 29
- **Natchez Literary Series Continues with 'The Power of Place: Ellen Douglas'** – Nov. 1
- **DSU Hosts Civil War Sesquicentennial Lecture Series** – Nov. 6
- **Lynn Meadows Discovery Center Presents 'Remembrance'** – Nov. 14–16



DSU Civil War series begins Nov. 6

For more events and details, please visit our website [calendar](#).

Changes Announced in MHC Grants Programs, Forms

The Mississippi Humanities Council's [grants program](#) has undergone several changes. While the types of projects the Council funds remains unchanged, new forms and application requirements are being introduced. Key changes include:

- Proposals may now be submitted via email as PDF files.
- Proposals must be emailed or delivered to the MHC office (in person or via the mail) by 5 p.m. on deadline dates. The Council will no longer accept applications postmarked by the published deadline dates.
- Deadlines for Regular Grants will now be May 1 and Sept. 15 (formerly, the deadlines were April 15 and Sept. 15).
- Applicants must consult with MHC's executive director or assistant director regarding project viability before submitting an application.

Applications should always be made on forms downloaded from the [MHC website](#), since the forms are updated periodically.

The MHC grants program seek to fund projects that stimulate meaningful community dialogue, attract diverse audiences, are participatory and engaging and apply the humanities to our everyday lives. Grants may be used to support public humanities programs, exhibits, the planning of larger projects, and the development of original productions in film, television, radio or online resources. The MHC also offers special grants to support oral history projects around the state.

MHC Welcomes Your Support

Mississippi Humanities Council programs are engaging, inspiring and free of charge. Your gift makes a big difference to our mission of cultivating an understanding of our history and culture throughout the state. You help us enrich peoples' lives through programs incorporating history, literature, music, politics, philosophy and other humanities-based disciplines that illuminate the human condition. Thanks to your support, we are able to serve all Mississippians: all ages, all geographic areas of the state, all walks of life.

A small gift of \$25 will purchase two books for children participating in the Mississippi Humanities Council's [Family Literacy Project](#).

A larger gift of \$250 will fund a lecture in a school classroom, local library or civic club, by a member of the Mississippi Humanities Council [Speakers Bureau](#).

A \$2,500 contribution will underwrite a six-week reading and discussion series in the Mississippi Humanities Council's [Family Literacy Project](#).

A gift of any amount can support any one of our ongoing programs:

- [Oral History Projects](#)
- [Smithsonian Exhibits](#)
- [Public Humanities Awards](#)

To donate online, visit our [website](#). Or call 601-432-6752.



Disclaimer

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