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On the cover: *Eclipse* by Nancy Anderson, Business Manager, First Regional Library
The artwork was created with alcohol ink that has been layered onto a wood panel.

Mississippi Libraries is a quarterly, open access publication of the Mississippi Library Association (MLA). The articles, reports, and features herein represent viewpoints of their respective authors and are not necessarily the official options of the Association.

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President's Page

This quarter has been focused on building for the future. The Executive Board appreciates the hard work of the Nominating Committee and Chair, Jennifer Brannock, as well as the Election Committee and Chair, Jennifer Smith, on completing the important work of selecting new leaders. It's always encouraging to have an excellent group of volunteers ready to head our organization. At our May meeting the officers for next year were approved:

Vice President: Mara Villa Polk

Secretary: Tamara Blackwell

Treasurer: Lori Barnes

ALA Councilor: Meredith Wickham

In addition, MLC Executive Director, Hulen Bivens, reported back on the positive results of the combined efforts of MLC, MLA, and library advocates throughout the state with the Mississippi Legislature. We hope that all of our members will continue participating in these advocacy efforts. The more we educate state leaders about libraries and our needs, the more progress we can make in getting better support. We especially want to work towards more support for MAGNOLIA, which is an important tool for all of us. In June, Mr. Bivens will team up with Legislative Chair, Meredith Wickham, and Past President, Sarah Mangrum, to visit with our leaders in Washington during the ALA Conference. Ellen Ruffin, ALA Councilor, will also attend workshops on behalf of MLA during the meeting.

Building relationships of many kinds are key to our success, so we are also very pleased to approve a proposal that SELA Representative



Ashley Dees has done a lot of work on: a joint conference with SELA in 2022. This will help us connect with colleagues throughout the region.

Another item moved forward was clarifying the language in the MLA Handbook to read that librarians of all types are eligible and welcome to be nominated for Vice President and to more explicitly include School and Special librarians in that wording. This change was approved by the board and will be put to members for a vote.

MLA Outreach was at the Children's Book Festival to connect with potential members, and a great opportunity to get more involved with MLA is coming up in August with the Mississippi Book Festival. MLA will have a tent on the Capitol lawn promoting libraries to the thousands of book-lovers who attend this outstanding event. Look for more information on the listserv from Phillip Carter, Outreach Chair, in the near future.

An additional exciting opportunity presented at the May meeting is a scholarship for a first-time Conference attendee sponsored by Billionix. The Public Library Section Chair, Mara Villa Polk, has created an application process that will be

available once registration opens.

This year's conference is fast approaching, and Vice President Mary Beth Applin has been working very

hard with site representatives at the Westin to have an excellent learning and networking opportunity. Section and round table chairs are also

hard at work planning speakers and programs. I am looking forward to seeing many of you in Jackson.

MLA Annual Conference Teaser

Mary Beth Applin
MLA Vice-President

Every person working in any library or information center - librarian, staff or student - is a welcome member of the state's only association that provides training and advocacy for our state's libraries. Please submit your [membership](#) today and register soon for what promises to be one fabulous library conference.

This year's conference will be held in Jackson, Mississippi at the Westin Hotel Oct. 22-25. The theme "Libraries: Educating, Cultivating, Inspiring" encapsulates the very essence of what we do at each of our libraries. Conference is the time to share what we have learned or learn what we can share.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

Arts Education Director Charlotte Smelser, MS Arts Commission, will be speaking on grants and other little or no cost services available to librarians and educators from the Arts Commission.

PRE-CONFERENCE "EVENING WITH THE ARTS"

Join us for an evening of food and drink at the gallery and gardens of MS Museum of Arts, the largest art museum in the state. The museum is located behind the Westin Hotel in Jackson.

OPENING SPEAKER

Mr. Malcolm White, Executive Director, MS Arts Commission, past director of the Mississippi Development Authority's Tourism Division, past chair of the Mississippi Blues Commission and founder and owner of the iconic *Hal & Mal's* restaurant in downtown Jackson.

CLOSING SPEAKER

Jill Conner Browne, Mississippi's own "Sweet Potato Queen," author of 9 books and founder of the *Sweet Potato Queen* women's organization based in Jackson Mississippi, with over six thousand registered chapters in over twenty countries.

The logo for the Modern Language Association (MLA), consisting of the lowercase letters 'mla' in a bold, sans-serif font.

To join MLA, or to renew your membership:

<http://misslib.org/membership>

2019 MLA Executive Board Minutes:

<http://misslib.org/page-1860516>

Planning considerations for library safety and security

Tess Graham

Library Specialist

University of Mississippi Libraries

You and your coworkers spend many hours of your lives in your libraries, so making your workplace incrementally safer and better-functioning can have a big impact on your daily satisfaction. You are the experts on your own library and know the most about the kinds of problems you might face in a workday.

While weather and people are always unpredictable, simple emergency plans tailored to your building, security training for new team members, having security manuals in place at each public service desk, and the use of incident reports/incident forms are the starting points for your safety program. Does your library have each of those items? If not, producing them would be a significant accomplishment; and if so, updating and expanding them would likewise be beneficial. Following are some conversation starters to talk about with your group. If your library has both daytime and night/weekend hours, as you discuss safety and security, do day shift and night shift personnel have similar experiences, concerns, and answers?

GOAL 1: PREVENTION AND MITIGATION

Anticipate and plan for weather, fire, medical, or criminal events. Here in Mississippi we are likely to experience severe storms,

tornadoes, and flash flooding. Are there other weather or natural disasters that would be a threat to your library? Do you regularly monitor crime patterns in the community? Do you have relationships with first responders, neighboring businesses, and community social services such as mental health and child protective services?

GOAL 2: PREPAREDNESS

Think through and be ready for unusual situations that might arise. Beginning with the building itself, is it safe and in good repair? Do all exterior doors (staff and patron doors) lock properly? Are all outside lights working? What about emergency lighting inside the building? Are the cameras adequate and used properly? All extra keys secured and accounted for? Maintenance areas clean and safe with paths for exits cleared? Do all personnel know how to use the PA system? Is the fire suppression equipment sufficient for the size and use of the building, and are fire extinguishers charged and inspected?

The next detail to consider is supplies. Purchase and store necessary items so that they are ready when needed. This would be primarily first-aid supplies, but what other things might you need in a power outage?

Having a comprehensive annual plan and executing periodic training and drills to ensure procedures are effective are crucial to minimizing the impact of unforeseen events.

Some example items to discuss:

- A fire plan and drill. How will the library be evacuated? Where is the meeting spot outside the building? Who will give the order to evacuate and instruct building occupants? Who will search for and assist unattended children and persons with disabilities?
- A severe weather plan and drill. Where is your shelter place? Who will give the order to shelter?
- First aid plans and drills. Each staff person knows where to locate and inventory first aid kits, and knows who is trained to use CPR and AEDs if your library has them.
- Planning to get assistance when needed. Does your library serve a bilingual community and are there translators available to call? How and when should library staff call police/sheriff/EMS first responders? Do all personnel have the updated emergency numbers at each library phone and in their cell phones?
- Prioritize the library collection for salvaging if possible. Which materials are priority to save if they can be safely removed without endangering anyone?

Also included in being prepared is a consistent plan to address undesirable patron behaviors. Does your library have any issues with theft? Have you had CDs, DVDs, computers, petty cash, office supplies or any other materials removed without authorization? What theft control equipment and procedures are in

place? What are the most common patron problem behaviors? Does your library have a posted code of conduct or rules list? Do the rules cover the problem behaviors or do they need to be revised to address specific infractions?

GOAL 3: RESPONSE

Ensure the safety of people first and the library's assets second. Use a predetermined call list to reach library supervisors if advice or approval are needed. Under what circumstances and who is able to authorize closing and securing the building?

If theft or other patron misbehavior begins to occur, address the behavior proactively. Treat all library users the same and enforce the rules across the board. Work with your co-workers so that one of you can be conspicuous and make sure the person knows you're watching him or her. If a verbal argument begins, attempt to de-escalate it by using a calm voice and body language. Author Steve Albrecht advises using the rule of three: Ask, tell, make. The first time you speak to the patron, say

something like, "I'm sure you didn't know, but (and state the rule being broken). Could you please not do that?" If the behavior continues, use the broken record technique to repeatedly tell the patron the rule they must obey. Some good information on the broken record technique is in the Bolton book cited at the end of the article. Simply repeat and restate the rule in response to whatever argument is offered and don't engage in any other discussion.

If you're not able to stop the behavior, bring in backup - a colleague, a supervisor, or if necessary, law enforcement. It would be a good idea to have a code word or phrase for "go to a safe place and call the police" that all staff know. Two ways to make yourself safer in a physical confrontation are to keep a barrier such as a desk or table between you and the person causing the problems, and to keep a can of wasp spray (the kind with a strong stream) at the public service desks. In a true emergency using the spray to someone's face will be effective to slow down an attack.

Response is not complete until

a detailed incident report has been written! The incident report will be the main tool to be used in the next goal, recovery.

GOAL 4: RECOVERY

Assess damage, evaluate and prioritize recovery and repair, inventory and replace emergency supplies. Review the incident report in detail for both correct responses and things that could have been handled better. Re-evaluate policies and training as required. Working as a team to prepare for the unexpected is an ongoing effort. Planning and following procedures for safety and security are two important parts of everyone's job, but of course have to be fit in along with all of the other tasks it takes to keep the library running smoothly.

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SLIS Notes

Teresa S. Welsh

Professor and Director

*School of Library and Information Science
The University of Southern Mississippi*

Greetings, dear scholars. Storytelling has long been a staple of librarianship from public and school librarians sharing fables, fairy tales, and children's stories as a literacy activity to storytelling by academic librarians and archivists as a form of

bibliographic instruction.

ORIGINS OF STORYTELLING

How was information collected, stored, and retrieved before writing? In pre-literate societies, information was collected and stored in the human brain and passed down by oral tradition using mnemonic devices to preserve memory such as images, knots, beads, song, or

rhyme. One epic poem with more than 15,000 lines, the *Iliad*, was passed down orally for centuries before being written down about 800 B.C., by Homer. This tale of the Trojan War was considered mythology until archaeological evidence was found in 1870 by Heinrich Schliemann of the Bronze Age city of Troy (Wood, 1998).

Aesop's Fables, written about 650

B.C., remain popular even in modern times. Scholars have traced the origins of many of the more than 700 morality tales to stories handed down from Sumeria, Egypt, and other parts of Africa (Dalley, 1991; Gordon, 1958). Aesop was thought to be an African who migrated to Greece since the root of his name is also that of Ethiopia (Aetheopia is an alternate spelling). For more information on Aesop, see “Aesop through the Ages,” published in *Mississippi Libraries* (2014). A list of the most well-known Aesop’s Fables with links to the stories may be found online at <http://www.read.gov/aesop/001.html>.

POWER OF STORYTELLING

Storytelling can be a powerful tool. Screenwriter and author Robert McKee (1997) thought of stories as “the creative conversion of life itself into a more powerful, clearer, more meaningful experience... They are the currency of human contact.” Theologian Robert McAfee Brown (1920-2001) maintained that “storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world today” (<http://thestorytelleragency.com/goodreads/50-best-quotes-for-storytelling>).

In “Tap the Power of Storytelling,” Rodger Dean Duncan (2014) states, “the best speakers are good storytellers. The best leaders are good storytellers. The best teachers, trainers, and coaches are good storytellers. It might even be argued that the best parents are good storytellers” (<http://www.forbes.com>).

WHY IS STORYTELLING IMPORTANT?

Storytelling is an integral part of

human nature. It is so integral to human communication that Walter R. Fisher (1987) proposed that instead of *Homo sapiens* (wise man), humans should be called *Homo narrans* (man the storyteller). According to Narrative Theory, humans are narrative beings and human rationality is determined by an “inherent awareness of narrative probability, what constitutes a coherent story, and their constant habit of testing narrative fidelity, whether the stories they experience ring true with stories they know in their lives” (Fisher, 1985, pp. 74-89).

Stories can be memorable – mental images triggered by stories tend to stick. Storytelling is an **effective learning strategy** related to the visualization of information, which is a powerful learning tool. Good stories are providers of context and can increase accurate and meaningful knowledge transfer. Research by Edgar Dale (1946) found that the greater the number of senses that are engaged and the greater the interactivity, the greater the learning and retention rate so the images and sounds of an effective story can engage the listener and create a lasting memory.

Learning to use storytelling in a purposeful way is an effective leadership strategy to capture and transmit organizational knowledge, to connect with people, and to facilitate collaboration and stimulate creativity. In *The Leader’s Guide to Storytelling* (2005), Steve Denning emphasized the role of storytelling as an effective, creative leadership tool, “The choice for leaders in business and organizations is not whether to be involved in storytelling - they can hardly do otherwise

- but rather whether to use storytelling unwittingly and clumsily – or intelligently and skilfully.... Management fads may come and go, but storytelling is a phenomenon that is fundamental to all nations, societies, and cultures, and has been so since time immemorial” (p. xvi).

CATEGORIES OF STORIES

Larry Prusak (2001) identified 10 categories of stories used in organizations:

- Stories about oneself and identity (why I do what I do)
- Stories about other people (inspirational or cautionary)
- Stories about the work itself (teaching or training)
- Stories about the organization (purpose story)
- Stories as social bonding (everyday stories)
- Stories as signals (what if... or imagine...)
- Stories about the past (inspirational or cautionary)
- Stories about the future (what if.... or imagine...)
- Stories about life itself (example or cautionary tale)
- Electronic storytelling (visual or multimedia). (<http://www.creatingthe21stcentury.org/Larry.html>)

THE ART OF STORYTELLING

Storytelling is an art and “it requires creativity, vision, skill, and practice. Storytelling is not something you can grasp in one sitting, or after one course. It is a trial-and-error process of mastery” (<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/storytelling>).

Naomi Chibana (2018) listed the

seven storytelling techniques used by TED presenters, which include:

- 1) *immerse* your audience in a story - use visuals to supplement but not repeat
- 2) *tell* a personal story that will connect with people
- 3) *create* suspense – either build a story chronologically to a conclusion or begin with an event and relate the circumstances that led up to it
- 4) *bring* characters to life, whether it is yourself or someone else, provide details that the audience can identify or that paint a picture
- 5) *show*, instead of tell, with effective visuals or descriptions
- 6) *build* up to a STAR moment (something they always remember) such as a memorable visual or statistic
- 7) *end* with a positive take-away, a short phrase or piece of wisdom, such as Aesop's moral of the story (<https://visme.co/>).

Good stories are “entertaining, educational, universal, organized, and memorable” (<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/storytelling>).

FREE STORYTELLING RESOURCES

To learn more about storytelling, explore these free resources:

- The Art of Storytelling - <http://www.khanacademy.org/partner-content/pixar/storytelling/>
- Ideas about Storytelling - <http://www.ted.com/topics/storytelling>
- Storytelling: How to Tell a Tale - <http://www.libraryspot.com/features/storytellingfeature.htm>

- Storytelling is Not Just for Youth Librarians - <https://hacklibrary-school.com/2016/05/05/storytelling-not-just-for-youth-librarians/>
- Using Storytelling in Libraries - <https://sfs.org.uk/content/using-storytellers-libraries>

INTERESTED IN A STORYTELLING CLASS?

If you are interested in learning more and honing your storytelling skills, Dr. Stacy Creel teaches a course on storytelling online each summer that may be taken for three hours of undergraduate credit, graduate credit, or non-degree credit. The LIS 428/528 Storytelling class is a study of oral tradition in a variety of settings with an emphasis on selection of stories and the art and techniques of storytelling. The course may be taken as part of a degree plan or as a non-degree course. LIS 528 is an elective for the Graduate Certificate in Youth Studies and Literature, which is designed to be earned with or post the MLIS degree.

JOIN US AT ALA ANNUAL CONFERENCE!

If you plan to go to ALA Annual Conference this summer in Washington, D.C., look for the Southern Miss exhibit table #651, drop by to meet faculty, staff, and student volunteers, and pick up some great free USM and SLIS swag.

Southern Miss SLIS Colleagues, Supporters, and Alums are cordially invited to a reception at ALA Annual Conference, Washington, D.C., on June 23, from 5-8pm, at the Eldon Luxury Suites Hotel, 933 L. St. NW, across from ALA Conference venue. SLIS faculty hope to see you there!

Please feel free to bring a friend who may be interested in the program and please RSVP to karen.rowell@usm.edu or look for the event on Facebook.

Feedback and suggestions are welcome – send to slis@usm.edu or teresa.welsh@usm.edu

Visit <http://www.usm.edu/slis> for additional information, email slis@usm.edu or call 601.266.4228.

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DEAR COLLEAGUES, SUPPORTERS, & ALUMS,
**YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO
A SLIS RECEPTION**



JUNE 23RD FROM 5PM-8PM

THE ELDON LUXURY SUITES HOTEL

*933 L St NW, Washington, DC 20001, Penthouse Suite
across from the ALA Conference Venue.*

*SLIS faculty hope to see you there! Please feel free to bring a friend
who may be interested in the program.*

Please RSVP to karen.rowell@usm.edu
or look for the event on Facebook

News Briefs

Carol Green

*Interim Head of Technical Services
University of Southern Mississippi*

SAFEGUARDING STORIES FOR PERSONAL COLLECTIONS

The Singing River Genealogy-Local History Library at Pascagoula was the host of "Safeguarding Stories for Families" at two free workshops in April and May. They partnered with Mississippi Digital Library who assisted in the events.

The Genealogy library invited the public to bring in family keepsakes, old family documents, family memorabilia, artifacts, and photos which may be added to local history collections. The library hosted the free day-long event at the Pascagoula Public Library and a second event at the Lucedale-George County Public Library. Local residents were encouraged to bring area photographs, family documents, and keepsake items to the libraries to have them listed, scanned, or photographed at no charge. All patrons participating received a CD of their digital images.

Genealogy Library manager and archivist Amanda Brooks stated, "I consider Safeguarding Stories to be one of the most important programs Singing River has offered up till this point. Our mission as a cultural institution is uncertain if we cannot partner with our community and assist them in preserving their own history. Providing a space for our patrons to take an active role in saving their history, especially in such a high-risk disaster area, speaks to what we as a community entity are all about. The library is planning

to continue the events in the future." For more information about the events, contact the library archivist at 228-769-3078.

The Singing River Genealogy-Local History Library is located on the second floor of the Pascagoula library located at 3214 Pascagoula Street. For more information about the library, visit the website at <http://www.jgrls.org>, Facebook @SingingRiverLibrary or @JacksonGeorgeLibrary.



Photo courtesy of Jackson-George Regional Library System

*Submitted by
Rex Bridges
Public Relations & Marketing Manager
Jackson-George Regional Library System*

AUTHOR VISITS BRANDON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Mark Cole, author of *The Nine Realms* trilogy, spoke to Brandon High School students during National Library Week. He also shared with the Creative Writing classes a little about the writing process. One lucky student received a set of the trilogy.

*Submitted by
Susan Lott
Library Media Specialist
Brandon High School*

MSU LIBRARIES ANNOUNCES NEW 'JOHN ROGERS: THE PEOPLE'S SCULPTOR' EXHIBIT

Mississippi State University Libraries is announcing an exhibition of works by noted 19th-century sculptor John Rogers. Titled "John Rogers: The People's Sculptor," the exhibit includes 16 sculpture groups on display as part of the Frank and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana housed at Mitchell Memorial Library. The gallery is located within the fourth-floor Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library and is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Born in Salem, Massachusetts in 1829, Rogers was an American artist whose sculptures largely depict the conventional lives of ordinary people. His works encompass subjects such as Civil War soldiers, the horrors of slavery, historical figures and literary themes, all of which are intended to evoke feelings of shared experience and nostalgia. Over the course of his career, Rogers sculpted roughly 80 distinct statuary groups. These were mass-produced



*Photography by Susan Lott
Mark Cole with Brandon High School students.*

for commercial sale and were most often cast in plaster. Rogers sold most of his statues for around \$14 (approx. \$425 in today's money), which made them affordable and accessible to middle-class Americans. These works became so popular in the latter half of the 19th century that Rogers was often referred to as "the people's sculptor." By the end of his career, he sold an estimated 80,000 copies of his works, which amounted to \$1 million in statuary.

Some of the most popular works on display in the Williams Collection of Lincolniana Gallery are "The Wounded Scout," which depicts a wounded Union soldier being helped through a southern swamp by a runaway enslaved man, and two variations of "The Council of War" which depict President Abraham Lincoln, General Ulysses S. Grant, and Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton discussing military strategy.

For more information, contact Ryan Semmes, associate professor with MSU Libraries, at 662-325-9355 or rsemmes@library.msstate.edu. MSU is Mississippi's leading university, available online at <http://www.msstate.edu>.

*Submitted by
Stephen Cunetto
Associate Dean, University Libraries
Mississippi State University*

MSU LIBRARIES LAUNCHES CITIZENS' COUNCIL RADIO FORUM DIGITAL COLLECTION

Mississippi State University Libraries is launching a new digital collection of Citizens' Council Radio Forum recordings, along with corresponding transcripts.

MSU Libraries produces, preserves and provides access to digital collections that support teaching, service and research by providing greater access to rare holdings. These include sheet music, diaries, correspondence, ledgers, photographs, transcripts, publications and other materials, all through the MSU Libraries' Digital Collections.

A \$25,000 digitization grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources' Recordings at Risk program provided funds for 269 original Citizens' Council Forum shows to be preserved and made available online.

The audio recordings are accompanied by transcripts, provided by MSU doctoral graduate and Millsaps College Associate Professor of History Stephanie Rolph, who transcribed the Forum recordings as part of her dissertation and donated them to MSU Special Collections upon completion of her research. Rolph also published a book on the Citizens' Council last year titled "Resisting Equality: The Citizens'

Council, 1954-1989" (LSU Press).

MSU Libraries is a destination for researchers studying Civil Rights and the Jim Crow era, of which the Citizens' Council played a powerful role. The recordings span 1957-1966 and cover a variety of topics, including the Supreme Court, education, the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts, and communism.

According to University Archivist Jessica Perkins Smith, who wrote the CLIR grant and has worked extensively with the collection, "Researchers have used the transcripts of the Forum recordings frequently over the years. The tapes themselves were in danger of being lost due to their age and condition. Digitizing the recordings provides the benefit of long-term preservation, but also gives researchers a chance to hear the voices of segregationist politicians and Citizens' Council leaders. We are pleased to be able to increase accessibility of our collections to patrons who may not be able to travel to Mississippi State."

For more information, contact Perkins Smith at jsmith@library.msstate.edu. To access the collection, visit <http://lib.msstate.edu/digitalcollections/citizenscouncil/>

*Submitted by
Stephen Cunetto
Associate Dean, University Libraries
Mississippi State University*



People in the News

Carol Green

*Interim Head of Technical Services
University of Southern Mississippi*

Jennifer Brannock

professor and curator of Rare Books and Mississippiana in The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Libraries' Special Collections, has earned the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA)'s Learning History Research and Innovation Award, sponsored by Gale, A Cengage Company.



Brannock was selected for her innovative historical research in support of her project, "Con Sellers, Masculinity, and the Publishing Industry: Lowbrow Publications in Midcentury America". The Learning History Research and Innovation Award includes \$2,500 to facilitate and further research relating to history and history librarianship.

RUSA is a division of the American Library Association (ALA) and serves libraries in reference, user services, adult readers advisory and collection development, as well as resource sharing, genealogy and archives, business reference and reference technology. The award requires that recipient research efforts include an emphasis in an area reflected by the History Section's subject-oriented committees, not excluding American history. Subject areas include genealogy, local history, instruction and research services, and historical materials.

Sellers was a Korean War veteran and Mississippi native who was

determined to write for a living. In order to support his family, he wrote for 'lowbrow' publishers and magazines, since quality writing wasn't considered a prerequisite for the genre, and Sellers could pen a book in approximately nine days. He produced more than 250 publications in his writing career, using more than 60 pseudonyms, and his papers are included in USM's Special Collections.

"I'm absolutely thrilled to receive this grant to further advance my research. There are very few manuscript resources available that are focused on this topic, and the collections that are out there require me to travel," Brannock said. "This award will allow me to go the Library of Congress and conduct research in one of the few collections around."



Librarians from the Jackson Public School District were recognized during the Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival. The festival, presented by The University of Southern Mississippi School of Library and Information Science, was held April 3-5, 2019 in Hattiesburg, MS.

Spann Elementary librarian **Jennifer Baker** received the 2019 Kaigler-Lamont Award, recognizing distinguished accomplishments in the promotion of children's reading by librarians and teachers in Mississippi schools and by children's librarians in Mississippi public libraries.

Lester Elementary librarian **Ruth Bowen** received the 2019 Richard Peck Scholarship. The scholarship, named for award-winning author



Honorees Jennifer Baker and Ruth Bowen.

of books for middle grade students and young adults Richard Peck, gives librarians and teachers from the Southeast region the opportunity to attend the Festival.



Sarah Mangrum, access services and assessment librarian at The University of Southern Mississippi, has been selected for the Library Leadership and Management Association's (LLAMA) mentoring program, a division of the American Library Association.

The mentoring program pairs librarians who are currently in leadership positions with librarians who are interested in becoming leaders. For mentors, it is an opportunity to share experience and knowledge by working one-on-one with a colleague who is ready to learn and benefit from that experience. The mentorship runs for 10 months and includes recurring communication and interaction with the mentee, providing career advice

and counseling based on related experience, sharing skills and knowledge, and providing positive feedback through regular meetings that can be virtual, by phone, email or face-to-face.

In addition, Mangrum received her Doctor of Education (EdD) in Higher Education Administration in May 2019.

Mangrum has been with University Libraries since Oct. of 2008 and a librarian since 2012. She recently served as president of the Mississippi Library Association in 2018.

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Emily Bell, a native of Cleveland, MS, is the new Director of the Bolivar County Library System. Previously, she was a librarian at the Roberts LaForge Library at Delta State University, where she also received her undergraduate degree. Bell received her MLIS from The University of Southern Mississippi.



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The State Law Library of Mississippi welcomes **Ginger Dressler** as its newest Information Processing Librarian. Dressler previously worked at the Mississippi College Law Library for a number of years.

Judy Reedy, the previous holder of the position, has moved into the role of the Jackson-Branch Librarian for the United States Court of Appeals Library for the Fifth Circuit.

Book Reviews

Michele Frasier-Robinson

*Education and Human Sciences Librarian
University of Southern Mississippi*

Anderson, Aaron D.

Builders of a New South: Merchants, Capital, and the Remaking of Natchez, 1865-1914

Jackson, Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2018. 304 pp. \$30.00 (paperback)

Natchez is known for its beautiful, historic homes, its Mississippi River vistas, and Spring Pilgrimage. A lesser known aspect of Natchez history is the existence and influence of a group of merchants who occupied a unique economic niche in the decades immediately following the Civil War. Thoroughly researched and methodically annotated, *Builders of a New South: Merchants, Capital and the Remaking of Natchez, 1865-1914* chronicles the emergence of a merchant class in postwar Natchez, Mississippi.

The author, Aaron D. Anderson, examines ten merchant families. The author writes, "At the core of this book are ten merchant family groups. They comprised a total of twenty-eight individual traders over the period 1865-1914. While having much in common in the developing Natchez mercantile arena, they displayed a range of circumstances and had diverse fates. Six of the featured families were Jewish immigrants, and each was chosen because of the extent of its members' participation as entrepreneurs and because of specific attributes that help explain their individual and group success. Some functioned as antebellum merchants in the area, while others were newcomers during the Civil War" (7). The ten families studied also include other European immigrants as well as Natchez natives.

Made up primarily of a planter elite prior to the Civil War, the wealth and the economy in Natchez experienced a fundamental shift as

merchants began to become part of the elite class. Anderson writes, "The defeat of the Confederacy and the fall of the institution of slavery brought about a great economic reconfiguration of the cotton-producing South" (5). Anderson's main argument, that the new merchant class of Natchez shifted the balance of power and wealth after the Civil War, is supported by extensive records including chattel mortgages, census records, newspaper accounts and advertisements, and merchant credit ledgers. While some of the merchants thrived for many decades, ultimately their reliance on precarious cotton crops which often failed, credit overextension, debt, and speculation caused them to lose their place of privilege. Anderson writes, "Thus a host of forces, both internal and external, were converging to corrode the position and profitability of the Natchez merchant class, and by the second decade of the twentieth century Natchez

merchants were in serious decline, signaling the beginning of the end of postwar Natchez mercantile supremacy” (187).

It should be noted that this book addresses a very specific topic in great detail, and much of it reads like a list of financial transactions. The general reader might hope for portraits of these unique families, but this is not the story of individual lives; it is an investigation of economics and the credit market of Natchez. The book's strengths, thorough research, extensive primary sources and dense financial records also limit its audience. It can only be recommended for the researcher, serious history buff or historian and would be a good addition to an academic library, a public library with a robust history collection, or a historical society.

Mariah Grant
Assistant Professor &
Associate College Librarian
Millsaps College



Cohen, Edward and Kathy Cohen
Blood Relations

CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018. 318 pp, \$14.99 (paperback)

Blood Relations begins with the main characters, Jake (father) and Kyle (son) Cameron, arriving at the home of their co-worker Laura, where they find her murdered. Readers are then taken to New Orleans two months prior to Laura's murder, where they learn the main characters are lawyers for the Cameron and Munger Criminal Law firm. One of the founders, Jake Cameron, is a successful criminal lawyer who

has a difficult relationship with his son, Kyle, who is struggling to be a criminal lawyer. Although Kyle is not as successful as his father, he has learned that his father is possibly having an affair with Laura. Kyle, desperate to protect his mother, Nola, devises a plan to confirm his father's affair and then seduce Laura away from his father. As Kyle follows his plan, he slowly begins a relationship with Laura. However, he fails to realize that while protecting his mother, he endangers his relationship with his fiancé Alison. Through dinners, court trials, and interactions with minor characters, the reader is led to the answer of who murdered Laura, the mistress with a mysterious past. Can Kyle successfully prove Jake is innocent?

For readers that enjoy suspenseful novels that provide detailed settings and complex character relationships, *Blood Relations* is a novel I would recommend. The Cohens' use their knowledge of New Orleans to provide readers with detailed images of various locations in the story. Readers can easily picture Kyle driving through the French Quarter to his apartment after his dinner with Alison or being at the table and witnessing Nola's tense family birthday dinner at her favorite restaurant just off St. Charles Avenue. The first section of the novel spends time thoroughly developing each character by providing readers with information about how the characters feel and how they interact with one another. Then the reader becomes involved with how those relationships change after Laura's murder and Jake's court trial. The authors, Edward Cohen, and Kathy Cohen, have written a suspenseful novel that readers will

enjoy as they are taken to New Orleans and into Jake's court trial to see if he killed Laura.

This novel is recommended for public libraries. If it is being considered for a collection, please note there are several descriptive adult romance scenes.

Justin Easterday
Education & Human Sciences Librarian
University of Southern Mississippi –
Gulf Coast



Jackson, Linda Williams

A Sky Full of Stars

New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 2018. 305pp. \$16.99 (hardcover)

Set in 1955 Stillwater, Mississippi, this sequel to *Midnight without a Moon* (2017) introduces the reader once again to plucky Rose Lee Carter, a 13-year-old being raised by her grandparents, Papa, and cruel Ma Pearl. The book opens with the acquittal of Emmett Till's murderers and recounts the violence waged against other African Americans in their rural community. Despite the daily reports of violence and the emotions they have stirred up in their small town, Rose's teacher fears reprisals from white citizens and discourages any classroom discussion about Jim Crow laws and the murders that are happening around the state.

Rose is joined once again by her best friend, the preacher's son, Hallelujah Jenkins, who teaches her about racial injustice, the Montgomery bus boycott, and the importance of peaceful protests. Fearful of Ma Pearl's reaction, a cautious Rose is eventually persuaded to join a group

of African American students who picket a white-owned business with signs reading “Coloreds can cook, but coloreds can’t eat!” (240) On the other end of the spectrum is Rose’s cousin, Shorty Cooper, who believes that violence is the answer to racial injustice: “Fight back, that’s what we need to do . . . Fists, feet, even guns . . .” (60)

Despite her big dreams and longing to leave the troubles of Mississippi behind, Rose declines her Aunt Belle’s invitation to live in St. Louis. Instead, Rose chooses to stay in Stillwater to help her family and make a difference in her community. In dealing with her own abandonment issues, Rose has compassion for others who have also been mistreated. For example, she encourages her pregnant cousin, Queen, to move north and start a new life for her and her unborn child. Likewise, she persuades her Aunt Ruthie to stand on her own two feet and establish a cake business out of Ma Pearl’s kitchen. With the cake business a resounding success, Ruthie is eventually able to send her children to school.

This coming-of-age novel successfully educates young readers about the dawn of the civil rights movement in Mississippi and the struggles that African Americans faced during that time. Recommended for readers 10 to 12 years old, this work is an eye-opening look at racial injustice and would be an excellent companion for discussions about the Jim Crow era in Mississippi. It may even encourage students to do more research to find out how many of the book’s events really happened. It is recommended for public and school libraries.

Linda June Owens
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Grace Christian Elementary
Hattiesburg, MS



Spillers, C.

Whirlwind: A Frank Marsh Novel
United States of America: Charlie Spillers, 2018. 276 pp. \$16.00
(Paperback)

Whirlwind follows FBI Agent, Frank Marsh, and National Security Council staffer, Kathy Foster, along with a slew of supporting characters from various federal, state, and local agencies as they race against the clock to stop a massive terrorist attack and uncover the terrorists, while simultaneously dealing with interagency politics and demands from the White House.

Author Charlie Spillers, a former marine and federal agent, uses his knowledge of the military and political entities that would be involved in terrorist investigations, to create believable and well-developed characters for the reader to enjoy. From field agent to analyst, each of these unique characters brings something new to the plot. Along with the characters he developed, Spillers also brings an interesting approach to the setting of a terrorism-driven crime novel. Instead of familiar terrorist targets such as London or New York City, the novel spends much of its time in locations within Louisiana and Mississippi.

Although the novel is not perfect, Spillers provides a compelling plot and interesting characters to follow along on their journey. These elements make it easier to overlook aspects of the novel that are lacking.

One such aspect is that there are a few instances of awkward and unnatural romantic interactions between the two main characters. These interactions seem to have been inserted into the novel at the last minute to create a romantic tension that did not flow naturally within the confines of the plot.

Overall, the book is an interesting and entertaining read and I would recommend it to any casual reader that is interested in crime novels of this kind.

Kathryn New
Arts and Humanities Librarian
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