

Division of Public Programs

Sample of a Successful Application

This document contains the narrative and treatment or script of a previously funded grant application. Every successful application is different, and this application may have been prepared to meet a slightly different set of guidelines. Each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations, as well as the requirements in the current notice of funding opportunity (NOFO). Prospective applicants should consult the current Public Programs application instructions (NOFO) and other resources at <https://www.neh.gov/divisions/public>. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Public Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

The attached application is incomplete. Portions have been deleted to protect the privacy interests of an individual, and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information, and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

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Project Title: *“The Prologue” on Points South*

Institution: Oxford American Literary Project

Project Director: Eliza Borne/Sara Lewis

Grant Program: Media Projects Production (Podcast)

Project Title: “The Prologue” on *Points South* from Oxford American
Institution: Oxford American Literary Project
Project Director: Eliza Borné
Grant Program: Media Projects Production

A. Nature of the request

The Oxford American Literary Project (OA) requests a grant of \$640,000 over three years to support “The Prologue,” a series of feature-length segments deeply reported and researched, to air within *Points South*, an hourlong podcast hosted by Sara A. Lewis. *Points South* reflects the richness and diversity of the *Oxford American* magazine and its affiliated programming. In the podcast we are engaging the most vital Southern writers and artists, presenting live performances recorded at our intimate concert series, and reimagining stories directly or thematically related to the award-winning quarterly print magazine, known both for its literary excellence and for its surprising coverage of a region often trapped in stereotype. Over the organization’s twenty-five-plus years, the South’s most important and promising writers, scholars, poets, and artists have told their stories in the magazine’s pages and at its events. The podcast’s current and future contributors give voice to the complexity of the Southern experience.

The inaugural six-episode season of the podcast is airing at the time of this application, and in seasons two through four, the OA will produce ten episodes per year. At the requested funding level, *Points South* will be able to produce and broadcast twenty-four half-hour segments of “The Prologue” over three years, broaden our multimedia offerings stemming from the podcast, and increase digital engagement through robust outreach and PR efforts. The Southern experience, historically and at present, is underreported and therefore underrepresented; the goal for this project is to syndicate segment placements across the country and the South in particular, which has been disproportionately affected by changes in media production—in 2018 it had more than three times as many counties without a single newspaper as any other region in the country.¹ We are projecting a total budget of \$797,500 over three years to be spent on production and post-production costs, reporting expenses, hardware updates, and multimedia supplements for the segment.

B. Program Synopsis

“The Prologue,” seeks to unearth Southern stories and experiences at their roots, tracing the importance of places, moments, and people to their reverberations in the present.

The timeline, presented in more depth in “Work Plan,” is for the broadcast season to run as follows: Year 1 segments (September 2020 – February 2021); Year 2 segments (September 2021 – February 2022); Year 3 segments (September 2022 – February 2023).

“The Prologue” segment will air first in episodes of *Points South*. Most installments will feature host Sara A. Lewis either introducing a segment and its lead reporter or introducing segments she reported. The vast array of topics and scholarship covered over the three years of funding will create opportunities for a diverse cast of on-air talent, including author Kiese Laymon, folklorist William Ferris, reporter Sasha von Oldershausen, and the entire editorial staff of the *Oxford American*.

Because “The Prologue” is designed to reflect a broad representation of the South, the exact approach to each topic varies greatly. We are committed, however, to consulting a minimum of two

¹ Abernathy, Penelope M. “The Expanding News Desert.” Center for Innovation and Sustainability in Local Media, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2018.

humanities scholars per segment, the majority of whom will be interviewed for broadcast. With each segment we will seek to further our organizational mission of exploring the complexity and vitality of the South, which requires meaningful interrogation of our region's history, values, and cultural and political landscapes as they have evolved over time. We will look at groups like freed slaves living near the Rio Grande and individuals like author Margaret Walker, seeking in each segment to find new ways of telling the ever-interweaving stories of the South.

In "Bedfellows Forever," an essay by Logan Scherer from the Fall 2019 issue of the *Oxford American*, Scherer reports on a surprising cultural practice in Southern history: the male romantic friendship. For "The Prologue," Scherer will re-imagine this work for the podcast format. In interviews with experts on male romantic friendship, Axel Nissen and Anya Jabour, Scherer will introduce historic and literary examples of these relationships and engage queer studies to examine this cultural practice, which resists easy categorization within contemporary understandings of hetero- and homosexuality. The segment will be scored with music evocative of time and place and will feature performed readings from "Tennessee's Partner" (1869) by Bret Harte and other male romantic texts.

Detailed treatments for two segments and outlines of the remaining twenty-two segments are included in Attachment 2 of this application. We are allotting thirty minutes for each iteration of "The Prologue," though the flexibility of the podcast format allows us to adapt the exact timing to reflect the needs of the story. Designed to fill the feature spot in *Points South*, these segments will have a final broadcast time no shorter than twenty minutes and no longer than forty.

"The Prologue" will live up to the expectations for quality that *Oxford American* audiences anticipate from our print magazine, multimedia content, live programming, and curated and commissioned music offerings. *Points South* is a magazine-style podcast modeled after the values of the *Oxford American*. Within the hour-long program, listeners will experience conversations between host Sara A. Lewis and artists, writers, and scholars, as well as adaptations of creative work from the magazine with accompanying scores and effects, and stories reported on location with elaborate soundscapes.

"The Prologue" will serve as the "feature well" for the program, a place for an extensive and engaging presentation of humanities scholarship. While each of the segments will require a unique workflow and varying amount of technical and creative resources, all segments will undergo the same rigorous production, editorial, and fact checking process as our magazine content. Each of these documentaries should be entertaining, thought-provoking, and surprising in its approach. With numerous contributors and institutional collaborators, the *Oxford American* is uniquely positioned to create this experience.

C. Humanities content

As with feature stories we publish in the magazine, segments of "The Prologue" require intensive research, consultation of expert sources, and a rigorous editing process to ensure that the material lives up to the *OA's* reputation for excellence and nuance. The podcast medium allows us to present complex ideas in a format that's accessible to listeners both in content and form. The scripts are written to provide clarity and synthesis of the material, while our post-production partners add soundscapes, archival audio, and original scores to transmit an experience that is both intellectually and aurally enriching.

Should NEH funding be awarded, the production team for "The Prologue" will have the time and resources necessary to present a variety of scholarly perspectives from across the humanities. We will consult our institutional collaborators for archival audio material; engage primary and secondary

sources; and capture interviews with the dozens of scholarly responders we've identified to contribute to the critical inquiry necessary to this project. An NEH award would allow us to scale up every aspect of this project and better meet the needs of the region and the expectations of our audience.

By devoting more time and resources to “The Prologue” and calling upon the *OA*'s deep archive of scholars and writers to contribute to the series, we will have twenty-four opportunities to explore the complexity and vitality of the American South. It is a region fraught with contradiction, and in each segment we will approach this contradiction from a fresh angle, tracking the ways reverberations of key moments in our past inform our present, despite, or perhaps because of, their complexity.

Recurring Themes

Southern Imagery and Stereotype

“The question ‘what is place’ might best be answered by rephrasing a bit: What is *a* place? What are *places*?”

—Barbara Ladd, “Dismantling the Monolith”²

Monolith vs. Plurality—Exploring the complexity and vitality of the American South first requires understanding that there are many Souths. To explore the region is to recognize that no single geographic, social, or psychic space extends throughout what is considered the American South; however, in order to demonstrate the diversity of what is often perceived as a singular region, we are tasked with creating a project that is built upon this idea of singularity while recognizing the necessity of every place’s “aesthetic, rhetorical, historical, ideological, cultural” particularity.³ The experience of formerly enslaved and indigenous people on the Rio Grande (as told by Michelle García) is vastly different from the middle class men enjoying romantic friendships at the same time in Virginia (as told by Logan Scherer). Each of these stories centers on experiences that trouble our understanding of the region. Contemporary audiences may imagine refugees at the Southern border only crossing the Rio Grande from the South; this series seeks to represent region (an idea often externally applied) and the places that make it up as sites of “cultural dynamism.”⁴ Taken as a whole, “The Prologue” will reflect the multitudinous Southern experience, while homing in on essential aspects of the human condition.

Race and Reconstruction

The Southern Dialectic—This approach is informed by the Hegelian Dialectic, which posits that a thesis and an anti-thesis can both be true and the tension that results from this contradiction forms a third idea that sublates into something greater. In the premiere segment of “The Prologue,” documentarian Ken Burns says, “One of the great gifts of history, as opposed to journalism, is it has the perspective—it has the passage of time necessary to triangulate . . . so that you can learn that sometimes the truth and the opposite of that truth are true at the same time.” The truth and its opposite coexist throughout Southern history, and engaging this Southern Dialectic as an approach to storytelling reveals moments in Southern history that show it at its worst while also revealing it at its best. Reconstruction is particularly suited to this theory. Take for example the freed people of Edisto Island, South Carolina, who built an entire community in the years following the Emancipation Proclamation only to have their land repossessed by the US government and returned

² Ladd, Barbara. “Dismantling the Monolith: Southern Places – Past, Present, and Future.” *Critical Survey*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2000, pp. 28–42.

³ Ibid. 29

⁴ Ibid. 32

to former slaveholders. To see this story *only* as tragedy strips the Edisto people of their agency and their contributions to Southern culture. The progress of the Edisto people and the failed promise of Reconstruction are opposing narratives in American history, but is there something greater that emerges from this telling of contradictions? Or perhaps, given the slow progress of racial equality since Reconstruction, is Theodor Adorno's response to Hegel more applicable? In his *Negative Dialectic* Adorno argued against the positivist unity of Hegel's theory, claiming in this approach that "whatever happens to come into the dialectical mill will be reduced to the merely logical form of contradiction, and that the full diversity of the noncontradictory . . . will be ignored."⁵ Hegel and Adorno remind us that something interesting can emerge when a thing and its opposite meet, but the assumed binary of that approach can also limit the nuance of the telling. The inherent contradictions that emerge from engaging the South challenge conventional narratives, creating opportunities for these segments to resist easy interpretations.

(Im)migration and Borderlands

"Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them*. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition."

—Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza*⁶

This series will tell a number of stories about immigration, migration, and forced relocation. Anzaldúa's *mestiza*, though set at the US-Mexico border, applies to many cultural intersections in the South, where the meeting place of two cultures often creates a third identity that exists somewhere in the middle. *Borderlands* will especially inform stories set in South and West Texas: Jefferson Davis's camel experiment; the Southern Underground Railroad, which provided safe passage for enslaved people to Mexico; the boom and bust of mining in Terlingua.

Anzaldúa's theories about assimilation and the retention of one's intersecting identities will also guide the approach to a segment on Vietnamese diaspora told through the lens of Southern cuisine. Rather than relegate the story to an *us* versus *them* telling, the segment will situate Vietnamese and Viet-Cajun cuisine as part of complex Southern foodways, occupying a hybrid/*mestiza* identity rather than reinforcing the borders of "Orient and Occident."

Writing within and beyond the canon: the persistent relevance of forgotten writers and texts

"The adequacy of . . . literary history is challenged by the recovery of forgotten or lost texts and the acquisition of new insights. Moreover, advances in cultural theory and criticism may necessitate continued modification and revision of the historical interpretation. Thus, literary history is always a work-in-progress."

—Maryemma Graham and Jerry W. Ward, *The Cambridge History of African American Literature*⁷

By engaging works beyond the canon, "The Prologue" will inherently challenge what the American canon does and should contain. We will explore how works provide new understanding of the

⁵ Adorno, Theodor W. *Negative Dialectics*. 1966. Translated by E.B. Ashton, London: Routledge, 1990.

⁶ Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. 4th ed., Aunt Lute Books, 2012.

⁷ Graham, Maryemma, and Jerry W. Ward, Jr., editors. *The Cambridge History of African American Literature*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

sociohistoric moments from which they emerged and how our engagement as twenty-first century readers is informed by evolving perceptions of craft and quality.

A recurring segment in “The Prologue,” *Beyond the Canon* will pair a contemporary Southern writer with an underappreciated Southern writer from the past to explore, along with literary scholars, the continued relevance of the writer’s work. The *Oxford American*, as the magazine of great Southern writing, is singularly positioned to curate these conversations, and this audio format will allow us to engage texts through dramatic presentations that encourage “close reading” from the listening audience. The consultation of scholars will also assist us in identifying meaningful source documents like letters and journal entries to represent the lives and crafts of the historical authors in ways that humanize them to listeners. Planned segments include: Diane Roberts on Lillian Smith; Tess Taylor on Anne Spencer; Kiese Laymon on Margaret Walker.

Other segments that engage the canon include an examination of the ubiquity of the Gothic in Southern literature, specifically the continued relevance of William Faulkner and Flannery O’Connor. While other *Beyond the Canon* segments uncover the relevance of forgotten works and how they reflect the “acquisition of new insights,” engaging Southern Gothic literature will set up a scholarly conversation about cultural simulacra, and how—without nuanced contextualization—the Southern canon can stunt that acquisition of new ideas.

Finally, we will produce a segment on Theodore Rosengarten’s *All God’s Dangers*, an oral history about a sharecropper, which won the National Book Award in 1975 but has disappeared from the canon. This segment includes analysis of the book from literary scholars in addition to a story about the real-life conditions that informed it. We will discuss how “advances in cultural theory,” specifically the agency of marginalized voices, influence our understanding of this book as oral history and Rosengarten as mediator / gatekeeper of Ned Cobb’s story.

Music and Identity

“Singers with divergent racial, ethnic, and linguistic histories adapted traditional music forms to new, often threatening worlds, and their songs trace European and Southern ethnic diasporas within the United States.”

—William Ferris, *Folk Music and Modern Sound*⁸

Music, arguably the South’s greatest cultural export, plays an integral role in this project. Many planned segments engage music directly, like the story about Edisto Island mentioned above, or another about The Insect Trust, music critic Robert Palmer’s band with an Arkansas/Memphis pedigree. These segments interrogate how sound is tied to place—often directly as in The Insect Trust’s recording of “The Singing Bridge” in Memphis—and how it functions to transmit identity and lineage. Music plays a vital role in this project as an audio medium and also as a source of cultural information. The soundtrack to a segment about sharecropping in Alabama will give the reader as much information as the narration, tracking linguistic and ethnic influences. In collaboration with core humanities adviser William Ferris and institutional partners like Smithsonian Folkways, we will identify music that reveals lived and inherited experience, connecting the personal and cultural identities of a story’s subjects.

⁸ Ferris, William R., and Mary L. Hart. *Folk Music and Modern Sound*. University Press of Mississippi, 1982.

D. Creative approach

When the OA first conceived the format for *Points South*, we committed to devoting the majority of our resources to deep cultural excavations of our region that tapped into our relationships with writers, scholars, institutions, and multimedia producers. The subjects in “The Prologue” are quite diverse in content and approach, but each will undergo a telling that leverages the OA’s collaborative relationships and will demonstrate the power of those collaborations in this multimodal approach.

Segments of “The Prologue” will contain narration, interviews with experts, recordings from the field, archival audio and music, and a rich soundscape of ambient sounds, Foley, and originally scored music. The goal is to create a rich aural experience that enhances the critical inquiry of the subject with a multifaceted approach to its telling. The success of podcasts in recent years indicates that this medium is an effective place to meet an audience and share stories; this success also means that creators like the OA need to produce stimulating material, both intellectually and aurally.

Narration is a key element of this segment in future seasons. The professional writers and editors on the media team are positioned to draft and revise scripts, particularly the sections of voice over that will most reflect the literary sensibilities of the print magazine. Additionally, we’ll work with the magazine’s contributors to re-envision their nonfiction essays and engage topics of interest, and we will benefit from collaborating with other professional writers to fashion voice overs that synthesize their own perspectives on the subjects along with those of the attached scholars.

In addition to informing the scripting process, interviews with scholars will also figure into every segment, usually to be included in some form for broadcast. When interviewing scholars for “The Prologue,” we often ask them to help “world-build” the segment, to lay down the context needed for the audience to understand the subject’s significance, and to add those particular and telling details that only an expert can provide.

For the past twenty-two years, the OA has published an annual music issue and accompanying CD compilation, which requires substantial work in music licensing and archival research. Over time, we have developed relationships with several institutions that have become collaborators on the project, first points of contact for ideas and information. We are excited to extend these relationships to the podcast, and will reach out to the Alan Lomax Archives, the Southern Folklife Collection, the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University, Smithsonian Folkways, and similarly equipped institutions and individuals for the best archival audio to fit our needs. “The Prologue” will benefit from these relationships as we navigate the identification and licensing of archival audio.

In addition to the institutional contacts already in place, the OA has a deep network of reporters and writers. Contributors will serve as on-air talent, performing narration, and their on-site reporting will help create a richer soundscape with interviews and the sounds of place. By allowing listeners to hear part of the experience, we build out the story in ways that both supplement and transcend print.

Spacebomb Studios (*S-Town*) will bring these stories to life, artfully combining many different textures of sound to create the final project. In our pilot season, Spacebomb has applied soundbed and theme music across the series. With NEH funding we will develop a theme and score unique to each segment of “The Prologue,” an experience that emphasizes the particularity of every piece we produce.

We have also developed a process of literary dramatization for another recurring *Points South* segment, which we will apply, when appropriate, to segments of “The Prologue.” For some of these stories there are no oral histories or archival audio. Voice actors can bring primary documents to

life. Additionally, actors will perform readings of literature featured in *Beyond the Canon* and other text-based segments.

E. Digital component (if applicable)

In the fall of 2019, *Oxford American* will launch a redesign of our print edition, with a redesign of our website planned for spring 2020. Funding from the NEH will allow us to build out the newly designed OxfordAmerican.org/PointsSouth, creating a more dynamic and engaging user experience; listeners will be able to access podcast episodes and descriptive show notes along with additional behind-the-scenes, interactive, multimedia content. This space will create a destination beyond the directory listing for listeners and feature images of primary documents, interviews with subjects, and videos captured in the field. Receiving the grant would give us the latitude to create and maintain a healthy web presence for the show.

Segment pages will include the produced audio, extended and/or unedited interviews, visual components, and recommendations for further listening and reading. Because there is often overlap between stories from our print archive and the subject matter planned for “The Prologue,” there is ample opportunity to deepen our listeners’ understanding of the OA’s mission by linking to related stories and thus creating synergy between the podcast-specific site and our extensive print archive. Our first segment of “The Prologue,” airing in September, references a Thomas Hart Benton painting, music producer Ralph Peer, and Rhiannon Giddens’s banjo expertise. On OxfordAmerican.org/PointsSouth we will include links to editor Eliza Borné’s essay from the Tennessee Music Issue, which features Benton’s painting; Wyatt Williams’s profile of Peer from the Georgia Music Issue; and Gayle Wald’s profile of Rhiannon Giddens from the Visions of the Blues Issue. With NEH funding, these pages will also include the supplementary materials outlined in Attachment 2.

One example is our planned segment produced by Michelle García about a community near the Rio Grande that offered refuge from slavery in the mid-nineteenth century. On the webpage for this segment, we would include the episode in its entirety, the transcript, and the show notes from the RSS feed. Supplementary materials include extended interviews with relevant scholars, links to their published works, photographs from García’s reporting trip to the border, links to García’s print stories for the OA, and recommendations to read related pieces from our archive, like Sasha von Olderhausen’s account of Jefferson Davis’s antebellum attempt to populate West Texas with camels, which will be re-envisioned for “The Prologue” the following year.

The development of programming through 2023 creates opportunities to engage with humanities themes leading up to segment premiere dates. As we approach a segment on author Lillian Smith, for example, we could include excerpts of her work on the *Points South* website, encourage a common read, and embed archival materials like manuscript marginalia or audio of her discussing her work. We will encourage conversations across platforms and promote engagement at every turn so that the ideas presented in the podcast live beyond the podcast itself.

We will also commission four short films each year to supplement the podcast segments. These films, which focus on a specific part of the segment and explore it further, open up opportunities for additional engagement with humanities content through interviews, images, archival video, and other visuals that expand the telling of the original story. Additionally, the lengths of these videos are suitable for users meeting us in our web and social spaces; each film is especially designed to deliver engaging content in less than five minutes. There will be some overlap between the podcast and the films with interviews, archival materials, and score, but each will offer an angle on the story that

extends beyond the podcast segment. The core media team will consult BLKBOX design labs CEO Shayne Hart and Emmy–award winning documentary film producer Steve Narisi to conceive and produce the short films each season. Narisi and Hart will help producers devise the concept and identify the filmmaker best suited to create the work. Additionally, Narisi and Hart will advise on best practices for capturing multimedia content for each segment and Hart will design ways to integrate the content on OxfordAmerican.org/PointsSouth. (Examples of how all this content can coexist on the site is included in Attachment 4, and bios, résumés and letters of commitment for multimedia consultants are included in Attachment 7.)

F. Collections to be used by the project

- Texas State University’s NASA / Johnson Space Center oral history
 - Archival audio to be used in segment on people of the Space Race
- Mississippi Civil Rights Museum
 - Consult documents and exhibits for segments on Fannie Lou Hamer and Jackson, MS
- Alan Lomax Archives
 - Select field and music recordings for segments on Old Regular Baptists and segments set in 20th century
- Southern Folklife Collection including the William R. Ferris Collection
 - Consult archival music recordings to supplement score
- Duke Center for Documentary Studies
 - Coordinate with CDS director / podcast EP John Biewen for useful audio resources including oral histories and multimedia materials for web
- Smithsonian Folkways
 - Select field and music recordings for segments on people of Edisto Island, Old Regular Baptists, and segments set in 19th and 20th century
- Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library
 - Consult and capture audio and video for segment on LBJ and Fannie Lou Hamer
- The Anne Spencer House and Museum
 - Consult published and unpublished writings for segment on Spencer
- Margaret Walker Alexander Center
 - Consult published and unpublished writings and marginalia for segment on Walker

We expect to identify and collaborate with several more institutions at the suggestion of Humanities Advisers.

G. Preliminary interviews

Work completed to date is outlined in the “Progress” Section.

H. Rights and permissions

Rights for any copyrighted materials used in the program (sound clips, archival materials, etc.) are cleared in advance of broadcast, on a case-by-case basis. For music, the podcast will rely on original scores owned by the *Oxford American*, as well as archival audio selected and licensed through our frequent collaborators, including the Alan Lomax Archives, Smithsonian Folkways, and the Southern Folklife Collection. We will consult attorney Thomas R. Leavens on questions of licensing and fair use. Leavens’s practice in entertainment, intellectual property, and new media law as in-house counsel for media and recording companies spans nearly four decades.

I. Humanities advisers

We have secured participation from a group of core humanities scholars to advise globally on the project and ensure that every segment is anchored in critical inquiry and informed by diverse perspectives.

Thomas J. Brown is professor of history at the University of South Carolina. He earned his B.A., J.D., and Ph.D. from Harvard University. He is the author and editor of numerous works, including *American Eras: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1850-1877* (1997), *Dorothea Dix, New England Reformer* (1998), *Hope and Glory: Essays on the Legacy of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment*, (2001), *The Public Art of Civil War Commemoration: A Brief History with Documents* (2004), *Reconstructions: New Perspectives on the Postbellum United States* (2006), *City of the Silent: The Charlestonians of Magnolia Cemetery*, by Ted Ashton Phillips, Jr. (2010), *Remixing the Civil War: Meditations on the Sesquicentennial* (2011), and *Civil War Canon: Sites of Confederate Memory in South Carolina* (2015). He was an Organization of American Historians Distinguished Lecturer from 2004-2013.

Contribution: Professor Brown will advise segments rooted in or connected to Reconstruction, Civil War cultural memory, and the contextualizing of the Civil War and the Confederacy.

Darren E. Grem is the author of *The Blessings of Business: How Corporations Shaped Conservative Christianity* (2016), a book that details how conservative evangelicals strategically used business leaders, organizations, methods, and money to advance their cultural and political aspirations in twentieth-century America. He is co-editor of *The Business Turn in American Religious History* (2017), a collection of essays that reconsiders the role of business in American religious culture and politics, and of *Southern Religion, Southern Culture: Essays Honoring Charles Reagan Wilson* (2018). Grem earned his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Georgia and held postdoctoral fellowships at Yale University and Emory University before joining the faculty at the University of Mississippi. His forthcoming book, (b) (4)

In the Arch Dalrymple III Department of History and at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, Darren teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in twentieth-century U.S. history, southern history and southern studies, and modern politics and culture.

Contribution: Dr. Grem will advise on the political, social, and religious climates that existed across the South, pointing producers specifically to documents and figures that informed particular moments in 20th century Southern history. Grem's focus on Southern and New South culture will be an asset to identifying images, sounds, and visuals to include in the project as well as writers and scholars contemporary to the segments' time periods.

William Ferris is the Joel R. Williamson Eminent Professor of History Emeritus at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities (1997-2001), Ferris has written or edited 10 books and created 15 documentary films. He co-edited the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* (1989), which was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. His books include: *Give My Poor Heart Ease: Voices of the Mississippi Blues* (2009), *The Storied South: Voices of Writers and Artists*, and *The South in Color: A Visual Journal* (2016). Ferris curated "I Am a Man": Civil Rights Photographs in the American South—1960-1970. His most recent publication *Voices of Mississippi* is a box set published by Dust to Digital in 2018 that contains three CDs of his recordings of blues, gospel and stories, a DVD of his documentary films, and a book. In 2019, *Voices of Mississippi* received two Grammy Awards for Best Liner Notes and for Best Historical Album. His

honors include the Charles Frankel Prize in the Humanities, the American Library Association's Dartmouth Medal, the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Award, and the W.C. Handy Blues Award. In 1991, Rolling Stone magazine named him among the Top Ten Professors in the United States. He is a Fellow of the American Folklore Society. In 2017, Ferris received the Mississippi Governor's Arts Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Contribution: Professor Ferris's wide range of knowledge and Southern scholarship will be an asset to the entire project, particularly his experience as a documentarian and his vast music research. In addition to broadly informing our approach to Southern culture and imagery, Dr. Ferris will advise on archival audio and music selections for the whole series.

Sherita L. Johnson is an Associate Professor in the English Program at the University of Southern Mississippi, where she specializes in nineteenth-century African American literature, black women writers, Jim Crow literature, and cultural studies. The author of *Black Women in New South Literature and Culture* (Routledge, 2010), Johnson has served as guest editor of *The Southern Quarterly* for two themed-issues: "My Southern Home: The Lives and Literature of 19th-Century Southern Black Writers" (Spring 2008) and "Freedom Summer 50th Anniversary" (Fall 2014). Her current project examines the period of Reconstruction, and black writers' varied responses amid the emergence of a distinct brand of southernness perpetuated by the "plantation school" during this moment of crisis. Since 2011, Johnson has served as the Director of the Center for Black Studies at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Contribution: Dr. Johnson will be the primary African American literature and black studies adviser for the series, and will contribute specifically to segments on Margaret Walker, Anne Spencer, Frank Yerby and segments framed by Reconstruction and Jim Crow. Johnson's broad scholarship in literature and gender and race studies across centuries and movements positions her as a generalist capable of advising on a wide variety of planned segments.

Sara A. Lewis (see bio in Media Team)

Contribution: Will serve as humanities adviser on segments engaging Modern and post-1945 literature, and oversee the application of humanities scholarship in multimedia and multimodal supplements.

Alberto Rodriguez is an Associate Professor of History at Texas A&M–Kingsville, managing editor of *The Journal of South Texas History* and Coordinator of Publications for the Institute for Architectural Engineering. Rodriguez has published: *Mexican American Baseball in the Alamo Region* (2015), "Ponte El Guante! Baseball on the US/Mexican Border: The Game and Community Building, 1920s-1970s," *The Journal of the West* (2015), "Spanish Southern States Recording Expedition," with Rene Torres, *Journal of Texas Music History* (2016) and "Africana Aesthetics: Creating a Critical Black Narrative from Photographs in South Texas" in *Africana Theory, Policy, and Leadership: A Social Science Analysis*. His upcoming projects (b) (4)

are a comparative multiethnic analysis of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, focusing on race relations in American and Borderland society with a specialty in Mexican American and African American encounters. Rodriguez holds a PhD from the University of Houston in 20th Century American History with a minor in Women Studies and teaches courses on Latin@ History, Mexican American History, Chican@ History, Texas History and African American History.

Contribution: “The Prologue” will most specifically benefit from Professor Rodriguez’s scholarship in borderlands, transnationality, and Texas history. With his broad knowledge of African American, Chican@, Latin@, and indigenous peoples, Dr. Rodriguez can also serve as an additional adviser on multiple segments.

Additionally, more than 30 humanities scholars and subject matter experts have been identified as resources and/or on-air voices for programming during the grant period for “The Prologue.” Scholars’ expected contributions are referenced throughout the application, including “Program Synopsis,” “Humanities Content,” and in Attachment 2.

(Résumés and letters of commitment for confirmed advisers and experts are included in Attachment 7 along with bios for non-core advisers.)

J. Media team

John Biewen (Executive Producer) is audio program director at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University, where he teaches and produces the Center’s documentary podcast, *Scene on Radio*. He has told stories from forty American states and from Europe, Japan, and India. Before coming to CDS, John reported for Minnesota Public Radio, NPR News, and American RadioWorks (ARW), the documentary unit of American Public Media. He became the Center’s full-time audio director in 2006. His work has aired on programs such as *All Things Considered*, *This American Life*, *Studio 360*, and the BBC World Service. Since its launch in 2015, *Scene on Radio* has received more than four million downloads and the show’s *Seeing White* series was nominated for a 2017 Peabody Award. John is co-editor of the book, *Reality Radio: Telling True Stories in Sound*.

Contributions: EP will advise during pre-production, production, and post-production: he will review treatments and production schedules during pre-production; he will provide technical assistance as needed during production and advise on best practices; he will meet with members of media team to finalize scripts and post-production elements; he will provide feedback on rough cuts. EP will be creative and technical adviser for the audio elements and guide direction for project, which core media team will execute.

Eliza Borné (Project Director) is the editor of the *Oxford American*. She has edited essays and stories that have been honored by the *Best American* series, the Pushcart Prize anthology, and elsewhere; in 2016, she accepted the *OA*’s National Magazine Award in General Excellence. Prior to being named editor of the *Oxford American*, she was an editorial intern, associate editor, managing editor, and interim editor at the magazine. Eliza has a B.A. in English from Wellesley College, and in 2016, she received a merit scholarship to attend the Yale Publishing Course: Leadership Strategies in Print and Digital Media. She serves on the Board of Directors of the C.D. Wright Women Writers Conference and the Arkansas Cinema Society. She is also on the talent committee of the Arkansas Literary Festival and sits on the Arts & Culture Commission of the City of Little Rock. She has served as a judge and nominator for a number of literary awards.

Contributions: Oversee entire production; write and revise scripts; produce multiple segments each year

Jay Jennings (Senior Editor) joined the *Oxford American* in 2015, after a career in New York as an editor at *Sports Illustrated*, *Tennis* magazine, *Time Out New York*, and *Artforum*. His freelance writing has appeared in many national newspapers and magazines, including the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Lowbrow Reader*, *Garden & Gun*, and *Travel & Leisure*. His most recent editing project is *Escape Velocity: A Charles Portis Miscellany*, which collected the reportage, travel writing, short stories, and

drama by the novelist best-known for *True Grit*. He is a frequent keynote speaker across the country on *True Grit* as part of the National Endowment for the Arts' Big Read program. Jennings, who has an MA in English from the University of Chicago and a BA from Vanderbilt University, is also the author of *Carry the Rock: Race, Football and the Soul of an American City*, about the Little Rock (Ark.) Central High School football team fifty years after the 1957 integration crisis. His work has been recognized by *Best American Sports Writing* and has appeared in the humor anthology *Mirth of a Nation: The Best Contemporary Humor*, and he is a two-time MacDowell Colony fellow in fiction.

Contributions: Conceive treatments; write and revise scripts; lead report and produce one segment; senior content editor across programming

Monique LaBorde (Assistant Producer) is an audio producer based in Asheville, North Carolina, and Brooklyn, New York. She attended UNC-Chapel Hill on the merit-based Robertson Scholarship. Monique earned a certificate in documentary studies at Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies and attended the Transom Story Workshop, a nine-week radio storytelling intensive in Woods Hole, MA. She has reported stories for NPR's *Morning Edition*, NPR's *All Things Considered*, WBUR Boston, WCAI Cape Cod and the Islands, WUNC North Carolina Public Radio, and WVPB West Virginia Public Broadcasting. Monique has worked as an assistant producer on podcasts including WNYC's *On the Media*, *New York* magazine's podcast *Tabloid*, and *Making Gay History*. She has interned with WUNC North Carolina Public Radio, WNYC New York Public Radio, The Southern Foodways Alliance's *Gravy* podcast, and the *Oxford American* magazine.

Contributions: Provides technical and production assistance to lead reporters and producers; research assistant for media team and contributors (as needed) throughout funding; identifies and licenses archival material; reviews transcripts and highlights good tape; lead reports and produces segments; manages fact checks and delegates production tasks to podcast interns.

Sara A. Lewis (Co-director / Producer / Host) is associate editor and multimedia manager of *Oxford American*. She was previously editor of *Memorious*, now in its twentieth year as an online-only magazine, and currently serves as a contributing editor. She received a PhD in English from the University of Southern Mississippi, where she was selected as a curator for special collections. She earned an MFA in creative and professional writing as well as an MA in English literature from Western Connecticut State University, where she taught in both the English and History departments and served as assistant to the Museum Studies Coordinator. Throughout her teaching career, Dr. Lewis has been invited to design courses and offer professionalization workshops focused on multimedia production and multimodal writing and rhetoric. Additionally, she holds a BA in Mass Media and Journalism from Texas State University and has completed intensive coursework in audio engineering.

Contributions: Project manage "The Prologue" series; host *Points South* and introduce or narrate "The Prologue" segments; write and revise scripts; lead-report and/or produce multiple segments each year; produce in-studio and onsite audio and liaise remote capture.

Trey Pollard (Lead Engineer / Musical Director) is an arranger, music producer, composer, conductor, and instrumentalist. As co-owner and in-house arranger at Spacebomb Records and Productions, Trey has arranged orchestral arrangements for artists such as Matthew E. White, Natalie Prass, Foxygen, Helado Negro, The Waterboys, and Charlie Fink. He composed music for the podcast *S-Town* from the producers of *This American Life* and *Serial*.

Contributions: Oversee edit, mix, and master of every segment; direct Spacebomb house band; arrange original scores for each installment; record and produce performed readings; and collaborate on archival sound selections and Foley.

Hannah Saulters (Web Editor / Contributing Producer) has worked at two National Magazine Award-winning, independent publications. She is currently the assistant web editor at *Oxford American*, where she is responsible for updating OxfordAmerican.org and generating social media content that reaches a combined audience of 77,000 followers. She has also worked as a freelance writer and editor since high school, where, in conjunction with her journalistic interests, she produced audio stories for Youth Media Project.

Contributions: coordinate all multimedia content to appear on OxfordAmerican.org; lead report and produce two segments; supervise digital promotion initiatives, delegate promotional tasks to podcast interns.

Sarah Whites-Koditschek (Associate Producer) served as the 2018-19 Wisconsin Public Radio Mike Simonson Memorial Investigative Reporting Fellow. Previously Sarah worked as a Little Rock-based reporter covering healthcare, education, and politics for Arkansas Public Media, a statewide journalism project she initiated and helped launch in 2016. Her stories have aired on Arkansas Public Media's Marketplace and on National Public Radio's *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered*. She has also reported and produced news for WHYI in Philadelphia. Sarah is a graduate of the Columbia School of Journalism, where she earned a Master's degree at the Toni Stabile Center for Investigative Journalism. She has won a first place Public Media Journalists Association and a Regional Edward R. Murrow award. She is a fluent Spanish speaker.

Contributions: oversee audio capture and production on segments attached to freelance contributors and non-engineer producers; as-needed scripting, reporting, recording, and editing rough cuts for post-production team; capture in-studio and onsite audio and liaise remote capture.

K. Progress

The first season of the *Points South* podcast, which is airing at the time of this application, opens with a piece on *Country Music*, Ken Burns's sixteen hour documentary on the genre. In interviews with Burns, musician/folklorist Rhiannon Giddens, and producer Julie Dunfee, the segment examines the legibility of African and African-American contributions to the sound and the perception of country music as emerging from a white, rural experience. In other segments airing this season, "The Prologue" visits a little known site of AIDS activism; explores the cultural memory of the Hurricane of 1900, the deadliest natural disaster in American history; and examines the lasting impact of Clyde Kennard, a reluctant activist who died during his journey to desegregate the University of Southern Mississippi.

In producing these first four segments of "The Prologue," we have developed a workflow among current OA team members and our post-production partner Spacebomb and identified the resources we need to scale the production up in a way that emphasizes the humanities content, i.e. interviewing more scholars, investing in in-person/field reporting, leveraging existing institutional partnerships, contracting diverse reporters/storytellers, and engaging advisers during production.

Another way for us to build upon our progress is incorporation of OA print pieces. Approximately one third of our planned programming for "The Prologue" is attached to OA contributors who will pull from previously conducted interviews and reports from the field. Finally, we have already begun

working with many of our humanities scholars and subject matter experts through research and interviews originally conducted for print.

The *Oxford American* has a long track record of conceiving of and producing highly acclaimed multimedia projects. Since 1997, we have published a popular annual music issue and produced an accompanying CD compilation (since 2017, the compilation has been available via digital download in addition to CD). In Spring 2007, we published a Southern movie issue with an accompanying DVD curated by the OA, which features short films, scenes from Southern movies, historic footage, and more.

In July 2009, the OA introduced a video series, SoLost, which was launched to translate the mission and sensibility of the *Oxford American* to a video format. These video shorts were published online until the series concluded in 2014 and received much positive recognition along the way, including grants from the National Endowment for the Arts in 2011 (\$25,000), 2012 (\$30,000), and 2013 (\$75,000), and a National Magazine Award in 2011 in the Video category. (SoLost was a finalist for a National Magazine Award in Video in 2010 and 2013.)

Southword, a multimedia partnership between the *Oxford American* and NPR, presented thoughtful and textured reporting about the people, places, and trends that are shaping the American South. Together, filmmaker Dave Anderson and NPR journalists produced video and radio pieces to provide timely and artful perspectives on the region.

In September 2017, the OA partnered with the Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site to present the OA-commissioned “No Tears Suite,” a jazz composition by pianist Chris Parker created for the 60th anniversary of the school’s desegregation crisis. It was presented again this year with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra featuring a new arrangement by Grammy-nominated jazz bassist and composer Rufus Reid. In conjunction with these performances, the OA filmed a short documentary, including interviews with and performances by the creators.

We enter the next three years of programming having created several major multimedia and multimodal arts and humanities projects. At the time of the funding decision in May 2020, we will be ready to go into production on all segments planned for the first year. Planned programming is outlined in detail in Attachment 2, and the timeline for production is included in “Work Plan.”

L. Distribution plan and audiences

The OA is excited to form a distribution partnership with Nashville Public Radio (WPLN), which will broadcast *Points South* to its 200,000 weekly listeners throughout the funding period. WPLN has also cultivated an audience for podcasts, particularly those that interrogate Southern culture like *The Promise: Life, Death, and Change in the Projects*. In the past year, their podcasts have had approximately 400,000 downloads.

We also plan to expand the reach of the podcast through syndication with public radio stations. KUAF in Fayetteville has signed on to air segments of “The Prologue” as they are released, to be packaged with introductions by Sara A. Lewis promoting the series and its supplementary content. This will further extend the reach of the series. We plan to syndicate “The Prologue” and *Points South* as a whole across the country, and the South especially, in a joint promotion effort between the OA and Nashville Public Radio to offer free syndication to public and college radio stations in large markets like Houston and in underserved markets like Whitesburg, Kentucky, home of Appalshop’s WMMT.

Cross-promotion with podcasts from similar organizations is another element of our approach. We will collaborate with universities, non-profits, and other media organizations to create meaningful cross-promotional opportunities that serve our respective audiences and reach new listeners. We also intend to share “The Prologue” with high schools and universities that have an interest in or connection to the material.

The primary mode of download distribution for *Points South* is mobile podcast apps, with additional engagement via the podcast’s landing page on our website. Our goal in producing *Points South*, and specifically “The Prologue,” is to reach the broadest, most diverse audience possible. We accomplish this by releasing *Points South* on all major podcast platforms and promoting the series to audiences we already reach through our print issues, social media channels, and live events. We will continue to expand our audience, reaching new places and people, through media trades and targeted advertising efforts coordinated by our in-house ad team.

One indicator of the potential audience for “The Prologue” is our annual Southern Music Issue, the 21st edition of which will appear this November. Included in each music issue is a CD/downloadable sampler of songs. We print 50,000 copies of this multimodal issue each year. Developing podcast programming is an ideal way to leverage the brand equity and audience dedication cultivated by the music issue series.

The OA has over 75,000 combined followers on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Our website traffic consists of an average of 70,000 pageviews per month from 33,000 users. We’ve seen growth in our followers and engagement rates across all social media platforms over the past six months and expect to see a boost in web traffic in conjunction with the magazine and website redesigns. We have a highly organized approach to sharing content on social media, and we will devote a portion of our marketing budget to paid promotion of these posts, boosting their reach and prompting further engagement from the audience. Our in-house promotion of the podcast also consists of house ads in each issue of the print magazine. Subscribers to the *Points South* monthly email newsletter, which will build upon the 33,000 subscribers to the magazine’s opt-in newsletter, will receive updates and previews on the production process, behind-the-scenes content, and the first invitations to engage with *Points South* in other ways, including live events.

At the time of application, we are one month from premiering the podcast’s pilot season. We expect that the addition of a podcast to our organization will also increase our digital audience by reaching younger, more diverse listeners across the country and internationally. Sixty-seven percent of podcast listeners are between the ages of 18-44 and tend to be more active on social media than their counterparts who don’t listen to podcasts.⁹ Approximately 28% of our digital audience, which includes visitors to our website and social media followers, falls into the age bracket of 35-54 years old; reaching a younger, more digitally active audience is key to growing and sustaining the organization.

M. Project evaluation

The *Oxford American* will use multiple methods to gauge the success of this segment within the podcast: media/press response, downloads of the podcast, traffic to the program’s website, engagement with multimedia developed for “The Prologue,” ratings on directories like iTunes, success syndicating segments, and effectiveness of advertising. In addition to quantitative analysis of the segment’s reach, we will seek anecdotal and qualitative responses from our audience,

⁹ Edison Research and Triton Digital. “The Podcast Consumer 2019.” Infinite Dial, 2019.

collaborators, and the humanities scholars with whom we work. The Project Director will conduct outreach efforts to encourage feedback on programming throughout the grant cycle and after so that we can make necessary adjustments in real time and create opportunities for reflection following the conclusion of funding. Finally, we will collate our findings into an annual post-broadcast report and, comprehensively, at the end of the grant period. The success of the project should be measurable beyond the grant cycle, however, as the segments and multimedia created with NEH funding will be available online for free and via public broadcast for the foreseeable future.

N. Fundraising plan and project costs

The OA is requesting \$640,000 of NEH funding to support three years of production costs for the creation of 24 segments of “The Prologue” podcast. The project in total will cost \$797,500 over that three year time period, and the *Oxford American* will contribute \$157,500, or approximately 20% of the total project costs, through a combination of cash contributions and project income. The *Oxford American* is committed to funding “The Prologue” project at this level regardless of third party underwriting; however, we are continuously reaching out to existing and potential OA funders. We will also seek major underwriting from the Walton Family Foundation and apply for NEA ArtWorks: Media Arts funding. (The OA has a history of successful funding from the NEA, including four consecutive NEA ArtWorks: Literature grants to support the creation of *Oxford American* magazine.) Our pilot season of *Points South* received support from the Arkansas Humanities Council and underwriting from private philanthropists in the OA’s network, as well as the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences to create four feature-length segments of “The Prologue.” NEH support will create opportunities for additional restricted funding from new prospects interested in the project’s programming. The *Oxford American* will also continue to solicit corporate underwriting opportunities for *Points South* to maximize production resources for the entire one-hour program in which “The Prologue” lives. NEH support directly and indirectly funds *Oxford American* initiatives to scale up production and post-production resources and the development of suitable web components and multimedia companion material.

O. Work plan

In funding year one, we have prioritized for broadcast the segments closest to having complete treatments. Segments slotted for funding years two and three require more development to land on specific treatments, and we plan to have completed the major parts of this discovery by the time of the funding decision. Upon notification of grant funding, we will finalize our financial arrangements with scholars and advisers, based on projected contribution, and offer contracts to the many writer/contributors attached to these segments. Discovery is essential to this mode of storytelling, so while we enter each production with a detailed outline, we encourage producers and contributors to pursue the surprising and unexpected aspects of the story, and we will have resources in place, like the Associate Editor and Assistant Editor, serving as dedicated technical producer and research assistant, respectively, ready to assist contributors, advisers, and producers throughout production. (Adviser contributions by segment are included in Attachment 2.)

OVERVIEW (additional details in “Script” attachment)

May 2020 – June 2020: Pre-production / production for Y1

- Core Media team meets to set production schedule to be reviewed by Executive Producer (EP)
- Producers set meetings with humanities advisers (pairings listed in Attachment 2)
- Meeting with Multimedia consultants to outline film needs and identify filmmakers

- Project Director negotiates contracts with contributors and honorariums for advisers and subject matter experts.
- Contributors and lead producers conduct background and broadcast interviews with subject matter experts and scholars

July 2020 – August 2020: Production and post-production for Y1

- Onsite reporting by contributors and, when needed, lead producers
- Producers check-in with humanities advisers
- Lead producers and Assistant Producer begin transcript review, rough cuts, and factcheck
- Lead producers and contributors script narration
- Co-Project Director and Assistant Producer meet with EP for progress/quality check-in
- Associate Producer completes rough cuts and delivers Y1 files to Spacebomb (post-production)
- Contributors and lead producers record narration for early-season segments
- Scoring Session 1: Spacebomb records scores and performed readings
- Filmmakers shoot and edit two short films
- Web editor gathers elements for early-season multimedia
- Assistant Producer and interns conduct archival sound research and licensing

September 2020 – February 2021: Broadcast Y1 episodes (8)

- Lead producers and contributors finalize script revisions
- Segments begin airing every two to three weeks. Web editor coordinates release and promotion on OA channels. WPLN coordinates RSS and broadcast
- Co-Project Director and Associate Producer meet with EP for progress/quality check-in
- Contributors and lead producers record narration for late-season segments
- Assistant Producer and interns conduct archival sound research and licensing
- Scoring Session 2: Spacebomb records scores and performed readings
- Filmmakers shoot and edit two short films
- Web editor gathers elements for late-season multimedia
- Final segment of season airs in February
- Project Director distributes evaluation survey to all contributors

March 2021 – June 2021: Pre-production for Y2

- Project Director disseminates results of survey and identifies needed changes going into Y2
- Meeting with Core Media team to set production schedule, to be reviewed by EP
- Producers set meetings with Humanities advisers
- Project Director negotiates contracts with contributors and honorariums for advisers and subject matter experts
- Lead producers and contributors conduct background and on-air interviews with advisers and subject matter experts
- Associate Producer completes rough cuts and delivers early-season Y2 files to Spacebomb
- Contributors and lead producers (if needed) complete onsite reporting for early-season segments
- Lead producers and Assistant Producer begin transcript review, rough cuts, and factcheck for early season-segments
- Contributors and lead producers script narration for early-season segments
- Contributors and lead producers record narration for early-season segments

July 2021 – August 2021: Production and post-production for Y2

- Contributors and lead producers (if needed) conduct onsite reporting for late-season segments
- Lead producers and Assistant Producer begin transcript review, rough cuts, and factcheck for late-season segments
- Co-Project Director and Assistant Producer meet with EP for progress/quality check-in
- Contributors and lead producers script narration for late-season segments
- Producers check in with Humanities advisers
- Contributors and lead producers record narration for early-season segments
- Scoring Session 1: Spacebomb records scores and performed readings
- Filmmakers shoot and edit two short films
- Web editor gathers elements for early-season multimedia
- Assistant Producer and interns conduct archival sound research and licensing
- Associate Producer completes rough cuts and delivers late-season Y2 files to Spacebomb

September 2021 – February 2022: Broadcast Y2 episodes (8)

- Contributors and lead producers finalize script revisions
- Segments begin airing every two to three weeks. Web editor coordinates release and promotion on OA channels. WPLN coordinates RSS and broadcast
- Assistant Producer and interns continue archival sound research and licensing
- Contributors and lead producers record narration for late-season segments
- Co-Project Director and Associate Producer meet with EP for progress/quality check-in
- Scoring Session 2: Spacebomb records scores and performed readings
- Filmmakers shoot and edit two short films
- Web editor gathers elements for late-season multimedia
- Final segment of season airs in February
- Project Director distributes evaluation survey to all contributors

March 2022 – June 2022: Pre-production for Y3

- Project Director shares results of survey and discusses needed changes going into Y3
- Meeting with Core Media team to set production schedule to be reviewed by EP
- Producers set meetings with Humanities advisers
- Project Director negotiates contracts with contributors and honorariums for advisers and subject matter experts
- Contributors and lead producers conduct background and on-air interviews with advisers and subject matter experts
- Contributors and (if needed) lead producers complete onsite reporting for early-season segments
- Lead producers and Assistant Editors begin transcript review, rough cuts, and factcheck for early season-segments
- Contributors and lead producers script narration for early-season segments
- Contributors and lead producers record narration for early-season segments
- Associate Producer completes rough cuts and delivers early-season Y3 files to Spacebomb

July 2022 – August 2022: Production and post-production for Y3

- Contributors and (if needed) lead producers complete onsite reporting for late-season segments
- Assistant Producer and interns begin archival sound research and licensing
- Co-Project Director and Assistant Producer meet with EP for progress/quality check-in

- Producers check-in with Humanities advisers
- Lead producers and Assistant Producer begin transcript review, rough cuts, and factcheck for late-season segments
- Contributors and lead producers script narration for late-season segments
- Contributors and lead producers record narration for early-season segments
- Scoring Session 1: Spacebomb records scores and performed readings
- Filmmakers shoot and edit two short films
- Associate Producer completes rough cuts and delivers late-season Y3 files to Spacebomb
- Web editor gathers elements for early-season multimedia

September 2022 – February 2023: Broadcast Y3 episodes (8)

- Contributors and Lead producers finalize script revisions
- Segments begin airing every two to three weeks. Web editor coordinates release and promotion on *OA* channels. WPLN coordinates RSS and broadcast
- Co-Project Director and Associate Producer meet with EP for progress/quality check-in
- Assistant Producer and interns conduct archival sound research and licensing
- Contributors and lead producers record narration for late-season segments
- Scoring Session 2: Spacebomb records scores and performed readings
- Filmmakers shoot and edit two short films
- Web editor gathers elements for late-season multimedia
- Final segment of season airs in February
- Project Director distributes evaluation survey to all contributors

March 2023 – April 2023: Syndication push / Outreach

- Project Director shares results of survey and how to articulate findings in Project Evaluation
- Continue promotion of series across channels
- Air a bonus “greatest hits” episode
- Project Director completes Comprehensive Evaluation

P. Organization profile

The *Oxford American* was founded in 1992 with a vision that still guides us today: the American South—a region so productive of great literature—deserves a great literary magazine. For more than twenty-five years, we have explored the vitality of our region through outstanding writing (fiction, nonfiction, poetry); beautiful design and artwork; an annual music issue and CD that examines untold stories in American music; live presentations of multidisciplinary arts events; and multimedia storytelling (including *SoLost*, our award-winning video series). The *OA* is frequently nominated for prizes. In 2016, we won a National Magazine Award in General Excellence from the American Society of Magazine Editors—the highest honor in our industry, recognizing both editorial and visual excellence. In their citation, the judges wrote that the *OA* is “a thriving example of a modern literary magazine—eager to experiment, yet firmly in control of its editorial voice; alive to history but bracingly contemporary.” Throughout our history, we have formed meaningful partnerships with arts and humanities organizations across the South, relationships that have and will deepen throughout production of *Points South*. The *OA* was founded in Oxford, Mississippi, and is now based in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Treatments and Segment Descriptions

Treatment 1. “What the Land Holds” by Kelsey Norris
Produced by Eliza Borné and Sarah Whites-Koditschek
Guided by Kelsey Norris

Humanities Advisers: Thomas J. Brown and Sherita L. Johnson
Scholars/experts: Angela Sutton and Krista Castillo

In 2017, a developer’s bid to build at Fort Negley, a long-contested historical sight in Nashville, brought renewed public interest not only in protecting the site, but also in uncovering its story. In order to construct the star-shaped stone fort during the Civil War, union soldiers rounded up a labor force composed of slaves, “contraband” escaped slaves who were promised freedom if the war was won, and freedmen—many of whom were forced into the labor. Horrible living conditions, demanding labor, and meager supplies led to rampant disease and death amongst the laborers and their families living at the camps on-site. Over the course of the four months that it took to construct Fort Negley, accounts estimate that between six hundred and eight hundred black laborers died. Many were buried at the base of the fort, and the surviving laborers and remaining U.S. Colored Troops soldiers stationed there formed neighborhoods in the surrounding area—what would serve as the foundation for historically black neighborhoods in Nashville. Now, a group of Vanderbilt researchers and Nashville historians is working to unearth their legacy. Adapted from Kelsey Norris’s story for the Oxford American’s fall 2018 issue, this segment highlights the progress and purpose of the Fort Negley Descendants Project and more broadly considers the question: What do people expect of a Civil War site? The segment will feature interviews with Dr. Angela Sutton, who submitted the fort’s successful nomination as a UNESCO Slave Route site, as well as Krista Castillo, Fort Negley’s Museum coordinator and longtime advocate.

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Treatment 2. “The Southern Underground Railroad” by Michelle García

Produced by Michelle García and Sara A. Lewis

Guided by Michelle García

Humanities Adviser: Alberto Rodriguez

Scholars/experts: Roseann Bacha-Garza and Alberto Rodriguez

In the mid-nineteenth century, a small community of mixed race families and freed slaves formed near the town of San Juan in South Texas. Faced with the dangers posed by legal slavery and white supremacy in Texas, they could flee to the nearby Rio Grande and escape into Mexico, where slavery was illegal. This segment will discuss the long tradition of fluidity between the Texas and Mexico border, its nearly 500-year history of racial pluralism, and the Southern Underground Railroad that led people enslaved in America to freedom in Mexico. Michelle García, a Dobie Paisano Fellow and curator of #RewritingtheWest, will report from the border, with contributions from Roseann Bacha-Garza, coauthor of *The Civil War on the Rio Grande 1846–1876*, and Alberto Rodríguez author of (b) (4)

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Segment Descriptions

(All segments will have a score written specifically for the segment, to be arranged and recorded at Spacebomb Studios after delivery of rough cut.)

Year One

Beyond the canon: Margaret Walker

Produced by Eliza Borné and Monique LaBorde

Guided by Eliza Borné and Kiese Laymon

Humanities Adviser: Sherita L. Johnson and William Ferris

Exploring the work and legacy of Margaret Walker, who in 1942 became the first black woman to receive the Yale University Younger Poets Award for her seminal poem, “For My People.” In 1966, she published *Jubilee*, a neo-slave narrative inspired by memories of her maternal grandmother which was described in the *Washington Post* as “the first truly historical black American novel.” Walker—whom the poet Nikki Giovanni once called “the most famous person nobody knows”—made a lasting impact as a professor of English at Jackson State University in Mississippi, where she founded the Institute for the Study of the History, Life, and Culture of Black People—now named the Margaret Walker Center. In 2017, nearly twenty years after Walker’s death and seventy-five years after the publication of “For My People,” the *Oxford American* published a previously unpublished poem of Walker’s, “An Elegiac Valedictory,” with an introduction by Kiese Laymon, a recipient of the Carnegie Medal for Nonfiction, who grew up knowing Walker in Jackson. “I write to and for her,” Laymon wrote, “because she crafted a life filled with the soulful, enduring literary art written to and for us, her people.” For this segment, Laymon will share memories of Walker and discuss the relevance of her work today, with contributions from Maryemma Graham (editor of *Fields Watered with Blood: Critical Essays on Margaret Walker; On Being Female, Black, and Free: Essays by Margaret Walker, 1932-1992*; and “*How I Wrote Jubilee*” and *Other Essays on Life and Literature by Margaret Walker*) and Robert Lockett, director of the Margaret Walker Center at Jackson State University.

Soundscape: Eliza Borné and Kiese Laymon studio two-way intro; Kiese Laymon in conversation with scholars; Kiese Laymon narration; performed readings of published and unpublished Walker works recorded at Spacebomb studios.

Multimedia: Short film of Kiese Laymon at Margaret Walker Alexander Center featuring performed readings of Walker’s writings; image gallery of primary documents and photos of Walker; streaming audio of extended performed excerpts.

Isle de Jean St. Charles

Produced by Sarah Whites-Koditschek and Hannah Saulters

Guided by Hannah Saulters and Boyce Upholt

Humanities Adviser: Alberto Rodriguez

Drawing on Boyce Upholt's extensive reporting for his feature in the *Oxford American's* Fall 2019 issue, this segment will underscore the urgency of the situation on Louisiana's Isle de Jean Charles, where the Isle de Jean Charles band of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Tribe face relocation due to climate change. by placing listeners in the environment and providing even further context on the themes in the piece. Scholars will give voice to this country's (and region's) history of displacing indigenous peoples, the effects of climate change on impoverished and isolated communities, and what to expect in a world where climate refugees will become the norm. Weaving together ecological and anthropological perspectives, the segment will further bolster the narrative Boyce created in this longform feature, with contributions from scholar Dr. Mary Ann Jacobs.

Soundscape: Field reporting, interviews, and ambient sounds collected on Isle de Jean Charles; Studio narration by Boyce Upholt; studio two-way introduction with Hannah Saulters and Boyce Upholt; studio interview with Mary Ann Jacobs; studio interview with an anthropologist.

Multimedia: Short film about the people of Isle de Jean Charles that illustrates the changing landscape and ecology; interactive map of eroding land; image gallery of people and places; extended streaming interview with Mary Ann Jacobs; weblink to Boyce Upholt's *OA* essay.

Bedfellows Forever: Romantic Male Friendship

Produced by Sara A. Lewis and Jay Jennings

Guided by Sara A. Lewis and Logan Scherer

Humanities Advisers: Sara A. Lewis and Sherita Johnson

This segment will contextualize the aesthetic and social dimensions of nineteenth-century manly love, and the cultural factors that made it thrive. For men of this era, romantic friendships came from a practical need to create professional networks that didn't otherwise exist. Lawyers and other kinds of upper-middle class bureaucrats, while affluent, were somewhat alienated from the two extreme ruling classes of planter patriarchs and political and economic leaders, and so they developed very close relationships with peers in their positions. What often started as a kind of professional bonding became an intense emotional connection. While nineteenth-century codes of Southern masculinity generally celebrated imperturbability and an honorable combativeness in the face of any threats to family or property, these friendships suggest a more expansive kind of virility, between men, that embraced vulnerability and tenderness. This male-male emotionality was totally accepted and, in fact, even sought after by well-respected men. Interviews with Anya

Jabour, author of “Male Friendship and Masculinity in the Early National South,” and Axel Nissen, author of *Manly Love: Romantic Friendship in American Fiction*, will explore the slipperiness and inscrutability of these emotional experiences that beguilingly fail to correspond to our own categories of normative interpersonal expression. In the absence of language and categories to delineate sexuality, there is a surprising, wonderful fluidity of identity. Featuring close readings of source material, professional voice actors will read from source texts like Bret Harte’s “Tennessee’s Partner,” James Lane Allen’s “Two Gentlemen of Kentucky,” and Bayard Taylor’s *Joseph and His Friend*.

Soundscape: Studio two-way introduction with Sara A. Lewis and Logan Scherer; studio narration by Logan Scherer; studio interviews with Anya Jabour and Axel Nissen; performed readings of texts recorded at Spacebomb studios.

Multimedia: Short film featuring interviews with Anya Jabour and Axel Nissen interwoven with performed sections of historical texts; extended performed excerpts streaming on site; image gallery of vernacular photography featuring romantic friendships; weblink to Logan Scherer’s *OA* essay.

The Old Regular Baptists and the Joyful Sound

Produced by Sara A. Lewis and Monique LaBorde

Guided by Sara A. Lewis and David Ramsey

Humanities Adviser: William Ferris

Adapted from David Ramsey’s story for the *OA*’s Kentucky Music Issue, this segment will explore the last living remnants of the oldest English-language religious music oral tradition in North America: the “lined-out hymnody” singing of the Old Regular Baptist churches in the coal-mining country of southern Appalachia. Lining out—in which the song leader sings each line and then the congregation repeats the line in a much longer and more elaborate version—dates to the early 1600s in Europe and is a root music for many traditional American forms: the “high lonesome sound” in bluegrass, early country, and old-time music. As Ramsey explains, “The result is both tidy and formal but indisputably wild (presumably, a hymn sung by ORBs never sounds quite the same twice). A sound that feels as old and mercurial as the weather.” As the church’s oldest generation fades, with no young people to replace them, its unique musical tradition is in danger of being lost to time. In 2017, Ramsey visited some of the few remaining churches still practicing lined-out signing in Southeast Kentucky and attended the annual meeting of the Indian Bottom Association of Old Regular Baptist Churches of Jesus Christ. This story is rooted in history and draws on the work of scholars such as Jeff Titon, Emeritus Professor of Music at Brown University, and on field recordings of the hymns made by Titon and, earlier, by Alan Lomax.

Soundscape: Sara A. Lewis and David Ramsey studio two-way introduction; David Ramsey narration; David Ramsey in conversation with advisers; archival audio and field recordings by Jeff Titon and Alan Lomax; commissioned performance of hymns recorded at Spacebomb Studios.

Multimedia: Short film on Old Regular Baptists with footage of performances and interviews with Jeff Titon, Dave Ramsey, and musician/music scholar demonstrating the lined out “hymnody”; stream full recordings on website.

Black Literature and Identity in the Age of Jim Crow

Produced by Eliza Borné and Sarah Whites-Koditschek

Guided by Eliza Borné and KaToya Ellis Fleming

Humanities Adviser: Sherita L. Johnson

In the late nineteenth century, after the collapse of Reconstruction in the South, Jim Crow laws—and the fight against them—began to shape and inform the works of Black Southern writers in the United States. Many began to use their art as activism, abandoning the mainstream genteel style and sentiment of Southern literature to create works that were decidedly political and overt in their calls for racial justice. But not every Black writer embraced those constraints. Rather than conform, some chose to leave. Frank Yerby was not the only Black writer to expatriate during Jim Crow, but he was the only one of note to have done so (in his critics’ opinions) because of his desire to continue to write mainstream Southern literature for predominantly white audiences. But did he really abandon his people and his country because he didn’t want to use his work toward the cause of civil rights? Or were his choices based on something much more complicated? This segment will explore the ways in which living in the Jim Crow South shaped the lives and, subsequently, the works of Black Southern writers—particularly Frank Yerby, whose message to his white readers may have been more than what meets the eye. KaToya Ellis Fleming, the 2019-2020 *Oxford American* Jeff Baskin Writers Fellow, will report from Yerby’s hometown of Augusta, GA, with contributions from Maryemma Graham, founder of the Project on the History of Black Writing at the University of Kansas and author of *The Cambridge History of African American Literature*, and Matthew Teutsch, director of the Piedmont College Lillian E. Smith Center and author of “Frank Yerby’s Challenge to the Myth of White Southern Womanhood.”

Soundscape: Eliza Borné and KaToya Fleming in-studio two-way intro; KaToya Fleming narration; KaToya Fleming in conversation with Maryemma Graham and Matthew Teutsch; KaToya Fleming field reporting, interviews, and ambient sounds in Augusta; performed readings of Frank Yerby’s writing recorded at Spacebomb.

Multimedia: Link to KaToya Fleming’s essay in the *OA* (forthcoming, 2020); image gallery of photos taken onsite; performed readings of Frank Yerby’s writing recorded at Spacebomb.

The Insect Trust Never Dies

Produced by Jay Jennings and Sara A. Lewis

Guided by Jay Jennings and Augusta Palmer

Humanities Adviser: William Ferris

In 1968, at the height of the counterculture movement, a band with an Arkansas/Memphis pedigree, New York jazz music cred, and a name borrowed from William S. Burroughs’s *Naked Lunch*, The Insect Trust, released a self-titled album on Capitol Records. The members of the group of early twentysomethings included blues-obsessed guitarist Bill Barth, who along with John Fahey, found Skip James in a Memphis nursing home; a saxophonist and recorder virtuoso who would later become the first rock critic of the *New York Times* and one of the great music writers of all time, Bob Palmer; and vocalist Nancy Jeffries, who later headed Elektra Records. The sound was eclectic even by the standards of the day, a bizarre mix of country, blues, rock and free jazz, and ambient sounds like a recording of Memphis’s famous “singing bridge,” but *Rolling Stone* praised it as “truly distinctive and vital. They could hardly avoid it, with a lineup of talent like they have.” The band released another album, toured, earned a fan in Thomas Pynchon (who approved use of his words in one of their songs), and disbanded in 1971 as its members pursued other careers and succumbed to various addictions. Since then, it has enjoyed various periods of resurrection among critics, named for instance in 2007 to the British magazine *Mojo*’s list of essential albums of the 1960s. For this segment, Jennings will interview the remaining living members to create a definitive sound portrait of a band that was emblematic of its age and yet completely home-grown and unique, with contributions from Dr. Augusta Palmer, Associate Professor of Communication Arts at St. Francis College in Brooklyn.

Soundscape: Sara A. Lewis and Jay Jennings two-way in-studio intro; Jay Jennings narration; Jay Jennings in conversation with Dr. Augusta Palmer and band members; archival recordings.

Multimedia: Links to existing audio and video of The Insect Trust; link to Jay Jennings’s *OA* essay on Robert Palmer; image gallery of archival photos and photos from onsite reporting

Year Two

The Camel Experiment

Produced by Sara A. Lewis

Guided by Sara A. Lewis and Sasha von Oldershausen

Humanities Adviser: Alberto Rodriguez and William J. Brown

Before he was the president of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis was Secretary of War, and he set out to populate West Texas with camels, animals he thought superior to horses. With sponsorship from Congress, Davis sent a couple of his men to the Levant to secure a caravan of camels and bring them back to the United States. This segment tells the strange and oft-forgotten tale of Davis's "camel experiment," which would represent the very beginnings of the U.S. border security regime, and set the stage for the modern-day border—a site of disputed territory, of polarized political discourse, and of separation. This segment will be reported by Sasha von Oldershausen, an Iranian-American freelance journalist, who has lived and reported from the Texas-Mexico border for several years, and featuring counsel from Emilio Zamora, scholar of the history of Mexicans in the United States and their relationship with Mexico, and Stephanie McCurry, scholar of the nineteenth century United States, the American South, and the American Civil War.

Soundscape: Studio two-way introduction with Sara A. Lewis and Sasha von Oldershausen; on-site reporting; ambient sounds and camel recordings captured in West Texas; performed readings of Jefferson Davis's letters.

Multimedia: Short film on the camels of West Texas featuring footage of Sasha von Oldershausen on a camel trek that showcases the landscape plus interviews with Emilio Zamora and Stephanie McCurry; image gallery of camels in South and West Texas from the nineteenth century to present, photographs relevant to camel experiment, and maps and primary documents.

Beyond the Canon: Lillian Smith

Produced by Eliza Borné and Sarah Whites-Koditschek

Guided by Eliza Borné and Diane Roberts

Humanities Adviser: Sherita L. Johnson and Sara A. Lewis

Adapted from Diane Roberts's *Oxford American* essay "Stay and Resist," an appreciation of Lillian Smith's writing and consideration of Smith's importance to the world today. Born in 1897 in Jasper, Florida, Lillian Smith (1897-1966) became one of the most prominent white Southerners to critique segregation; she is considered by some to be the "foremost Southern white liberal of the mid-twentieth century." Smith is best known for *Strange Fruit* (1944), a provocative novel about sex, interracial love, and lynching which was so controversial that the United States Postal Service refused to send it through the mail (until Eleanor Roosevelt, a fan, intervened and asked her husband to overrule his postmaster general), and *Killers of the Dream* (1949), an essay collection which exposes the South's power structure, especially the ways in which the upper classes convinced poor whites to aid in the work of segregation. Roberts, a University Distinguished Writer at the Florida State University who grew up eighty miles from Jasper, will guide the segment, interviewing Smith scholar Margaret Rose Gladney, editor of

How Am I to Be Heard?: Letters of Lillian Smith, with additional contributions from John Matthew Teutsch, Director of the Lillian E. Smith Center at Piedmont College.

Soundscape: Two-way in-studio intro with Eliza Borné and Diane Roberts; Diane Roberts in conversation with Margaret Rose Gladney and Matthew Teutsch; performed excerpts of Smith's writings and letters.

Multimedia: Common read of a Lillian Smith book; archival audio of Lillian Smith reading from or engaging her work; image gallery of Lillian Smith photos and source documents or marginalia provided by the Smith Center.

All God's Dangers

Produced by Sara A. Lewis and Jay Jennings

Guided by Sara A. Lewis

Humanities Advisers: Darren E. Grem and Sherita L. Johnson

The book described by critic Dwight Garner as “an essential American document,” *All God's Dangers: The Life of Nate Shaw* is an oral history of post-Reconstruction Alabama. Transcribed (and perhaps mediated) by writer Theodore Rosengarten, the telling reveals a social history that was not often written down. Though Rosengarten received the National Book Award for this project in 1975, the book has not remained in the canon. In conversation with Sara A. Lewis, Scholars Patricia Sullivan (*Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era*) and Catherine A. Stewart (*Long Past Slavery: Representing Race in the Federal Writers' Project*) will engage the text and its representation of disenfranchised sharecroppers and their efforts to organize labor unions, while discussing the ways oral histories both trouble and inform prevailing narratives of the American experience. The segment will feature selections from the Federal Writers' Project's recorded histories with formerly enslaved people as well as professionally performed sections from Ned Cobb's (Nate Shaw) autobiography.

Soundscape: In-studio two-way introduction with Sara A. Lewis and Jay Jennings; Sara A. Lewis interviews Patricia Sullivan and Catherine A. Stewart; onsite reporting in Alabama tracking the working conditions since time of publication; performed excerpts from Rosengarten's book; WPA oral histories from Alabama.

Multimedia: Extended interviews with scholars; image gallery of sharecroppers in the South from Reconstruction to mid-20th century; links to WPA oral histories; stream performed excerpts.

LBJ interrupts Fannie Lou Hamer

Produced by Sara A. Lewis and Monique LaBorde

Guided by Sara A. Lewis

Humanities Advisers: William Ferris and Sherita L. Johnson

On August 22, 1964, President Lyndon Johnson intentionally interrupted Fannie Lou Hamer's televised speech from the Democratic National Convention with an impromptu press conference on the occasion of the nine month anniversary of John F. Kennedy's assassination. This segment will examine why President Johnson, who history has remembered for signing the Civil Rights Act into law, would seek to limit Hamer's influence. The story will also trace Hamer's efforts in the civil rights movement, including her work founding the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, which she represented at the 1964 DNC. Host Sara A. Lewis will discuss with Dr. Loren Coleman the intentionality of Johnson's broadcast, the danger the administration associated with Hamer's pathos, and the reception of Hamer's speech when aired in its entirety later in the evening. Keisha N. Blain, expert in black women's activism and author of *Set the World on Fire*, will help situate this moment within a broader history of erasure and how the attempted silencing of Fannie Lou Hamer at once reveals the Sixties-era structural barriers to equal rights and the power wielded by those advocating for racial equality.

Soundscape: Sara A. Lewis in-studio narration; remote/studio interviews with Keisha Blaine and Dr. Loren Saxton Coleman; in-person field interview with subject matter expert at Mississippi Civil Rights Museum; archival audio from broadcasts of Hamer and Johnson speeches; archival audio from Hamer interviews; archival audio from LBJ library: phone calls, audio memos; speeches; performed sections from presidential correspondence.

Multimedia: Short film that contextualizes Hamer's and Johnson's respective roles in the civil rights movement through archival footage and interviews with Dr. Keisha Blain and Dr. Loren Saxton Coleman and builds to the night in 1964 when Johnston attempted to bury Hamer's testimony at the DNC.

The Space Race as Oral History

Produced by Sara A. Lewis and Sarah Whites-Koditschek

Guided by Sara A. Lewis

Humanities Adviser: Darren E. Grem

Pulling from the NASA Johnson Space Center Oral History Project (JSC OHP) at Texas State University, this segment will rely on first person accounts of non-astronaut NASA staffers to explore the nation's obsession with space from those out of the spotlight but on the frontline. How did ordinary Americans become part of one of the greatest technological achievements in human history? How did they respond to setbacks and tragedies like the Apollo One fire? And in

committing their lives and careers to the Space Race, what larger societal goals were they hoping to achieve? This segment will explore how ideas about the supremacy of democracy, capitalism, and American motivated one of the greatest sustained technological achievements in human history. Featuring guidance from Roger Launius, author of *Apollo's Legacy* and *The Smithsonian History of Space Exploration*.

Soundscape: Two-way studio introduction with Sara A. Lewis and Sarah Whites-Koditschek; archival audio of managers, engineers, technicians, doctors, and other employees of NASA and aerospace contractors who served in key roles during the Mercury, Gemini, Apollo, Skylab, and Shuttle programs; interview with Roger Launius; narration by Sara A. Lewis.

Multimedia: Links to oral history project; extended interview with Roger Launius; image gallery of NASA staffers; interactive timeline from Gemini to the Shuttle program.

The Architecture of White Supremacy

Produced by Eliza Borné and Sara A. Lewis

Guided by Eliza Borné and C. Morgan Babst

Humanities Advisers: Sherita L. Johnson and Darren E. Grem

Adapted from C. Morgan Babst's *Oxford American* essay "The House of Myth," this segment will explore how the ways in which we preserve and inhabit historical architectural spaces in the South can either help perpetuate racist narratives or help to dismantle them. Babst will report from Thibodaux, Louisiana, where her grandmother grew up in a plantation house, and the location of the Thibodaux massacre of 1887, in which a white mob killed 51 black men, women, and children. With contributions from John De Santis, author of *The Thibodaux Massacre: Racial Violence and the 1887 Sugar Cane Labor Strike*, and architectural historian John Michael Vlach, director of the Folklife Program at the George Washington University.

Soundscape: Two-way in-studio introduction with Eliza Borné and C. Morgan Babst; onsite reporting in Thibodaux, Louisiana; onsite interviews with locals; performed readings of newspaper articles from 1887; remote in-studio interviews with scholars; narration by C. Morgan Babst.

Multimedia: Extended interviews with scholars; stream performed readings of newspaper articles from 1887; image gallery of 1887 news coverage and locations of massacre then and now; link to C. Morgan Babst's *OA* essay.

The Fence Facing Midtown

Produced by Hannah Saulters and Sarah Whites-Koditschek

Guided by Hannah Saulters

Humanities Advisers: Sherita L. Johnson and William Ferris

Touching on issues of gentrification, divisions of class and race, and the role of higher education in Mississippi, this segment will look at the controversy surrounding the fence that encloses the campus of Millsaps College, a small liberal arts college in Jackson, Mississippi. The city block the college occupies is a liminal space, separating the affluent, historic Belhaven neighborhood from Midtown, a low-income neighborhood on the west side. The gates facing Belhaven stay open all day while those facing Midtown are padlocked at all times. Ironically, for all the barriers separating them, Midtown is an important factor in Millsaps curriculum since it serves as a learning lab, a built-in community service project and incubator for the business school's social entrepreneurship programs. This segment will explore the history of the college's symbiotic relationship with its neighborhood, drawing on perspectives from faculty, particularly those in the history department who have spearheaded an oral history project recording the residents of the neighborhood. Featuring interviews with Millsaps faculty Dr. Stephanie Rolph, associate professor of history, and Dr. Louwanda Evans, assistant professor of sociology.

Soundscape: Two-way in-studio introduction with Hannah Saulters and Sarah Whites-Koditschek; onsite interviews with scholars and neighbors; audio of oral history;

Multimedia: Short film featuring interviews with Drs. Rolph and Evans at the fence facing midtown along with longtime residents speaking to the symbol and history of a locked fence separating one part of the community from another; links to oral history project; streaming audio of extended interviews with residents and historians.

Pauli Murray's Influence on RBG

Produced by Monique LaBorde and Eliza Borné

Guided by Monique LaBorde

Humanities Adviser: Sherita L. Johnson

On the Basis of Sex, the biopic about Ruth Bader Ginsberg, includes an important (albeit slightly historically inaccurate) moment: Ginsberg is preparing to argue one of her first cases before the Supreme Court. Helping her prepare for the argument is a young Black woman in a pantsuit. This is supposed to be Pauli Murray, a trailblazing legal activist. Murray had a visionary impact on the Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Movement, influencing leaders like Eleanor Roosevelt, Thurgood Marshall, and Betty Friedan. Her 1944 Howard Law School thesis on race discrimination landed on the desk of Thurgood Marshall. After reading the paper, Marshall was compelled to "shift course" and "attack segregation directly as a violation of equal protection in

Brown v. Board of Education in 1954,” according to Murray’s biographer Rosalind Rosenberg. In many accounts of 20th century social movements, Murray is always just outside the frame. Throughout her life, she was discriminated against on the basis of her sex and race. At the same time, her intersectional identity was the asset that bore her visionary legal insights. This segment will expand on Murray’s work, especially her 1965 legal journal article “Jane Crow and the Law,” and will trace the ways this article impacted Thurgood Marshall, Ruth Bader Ginsberg, and the American legal system more broadly. The story will focus on how Murray’s experiences shaped her legal perspective and in turn, shaped our legal system today. This segment will rely on interviews with legal scholars and historians (such as Kenneth W. Mack, Rosalind Rosenberg, Barbara Lau, Serena Mayeri, and Lisa A. Crooms-Robinson) as well as archival interviews with Pauli Murray. It will draw from multiple high-quality oral history interviews with Murray about her legal activism and education.

Soundscape: Two-way in-studio introduction with Eliza Borné and Monique LaBorde; interviews with scholars/experts; narration by Monique LaBorde; interviews with Pauli Murray collected as oral history.

Multimedia: Link to Murray’s article “Jane Crow and the Law”; extended interviews with scholars/experts; image gallery showing Pauli Murray and her broad impact; links to oral history.

Year Three

Oh Mother Vietnam: Viet-Cajun and Vietnamese Foodways

Produced by Sarah Whites-Koditschek and Sara A. Lewis

Guided by Chef John Nguyen and Sarah Whites-Koditschek

Humanities Adviser: Alberto Rodriguez

When the first wave of Vietnamese immigrants settled in the US in 1975 they were intentionally dispersed around the country by the federal government which sought to prevent large pockets of refugee communities in any one geographic area. The cities of Houston and New Orleans, however, have large populations of Vietnamese-Americans who are a vital part of their cultures. This segment will examine how these coastal metropolitans became landing places for Vietnamese refugees and the importance of Vietnamese cuisine as a Southern import. Tracing food culture from nineteenth century Vietnam through present-day New Orleans, Chef John Nguyen will [examine] the cross-cultural exchange of Vietnam and the American South, why Houston and New Orleans became home to so many refugees, and how Vietnam’s food traditions are integrated into the twenty-first century American South. Nguyen will conduct interviews with Erica J. Peters, author of *Aspirations in Vietnam: Food and Drink in the Long Nineteenth Century* and Phuong Tran Nguyen, author of *Becoming Refugee American: The Politics of Rescue in Little Saigon*

Soundscape: Two-way studio intro with Sarah Whites-Koditschek and Chef John Nguyen; studio narration by John Nguyen; remote studio interviews with Erica J. Peters and Phuong Tran Nguyen; onsite reporting, interviews, and ambient sounds in Houston and New Orleans; archival music from Vietnam; archival newsreels from 1950s through 1975.

Multimedia: Short film on history of Viet-Cajun cuisine recorded in New Orleans and Houston, featuring interviews with Vietnamese-American chefs led by John Nguyen; image gallery focusing on Vietnamese diaspora; streaming audio of archival music and interviews.

Community land grant programs

Produced by Sara A. Lewis and Sarah Whites-Koditschek

Guided by Sara A. Lewis and Sarah Whites-Koditschek

Humanities Adviser: Darren E. Grem and Thomas J. Brown

In the 1960s, a group of civil rights workers traveled from the American South to Israel to better understand a land grant program that prevented foreclosure and loss of land, both of which they understood as barriers to black wealth and mobility in the U.S. This segment connects a fifty-year movement to install community land grant programs in Southwest Georgia back to 1814 when the region was first seized by the U.S. government from the native Lower Creek people. Experts in shared equity models, Chris Herbert of the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard and Brett Theodos of Urban Institute, will discuss the precedence of land grant programs in the South, the legal systems that have historically prevented African American land ownership, and why civil rights activists in the 60s and today believe these programs will contribute to racial reconciliation.

Soundscape: In-studio two-way introduction with Sara A. Lewis and Sarah Whites-Koditschek; onsite reporting and interviews with activists in Georgia; remote studio interviews with experts; archival audio; narration by Sara A. Lewis.

Multimedia: Short film about the trip civil rights workers took to Israel, featuring interviews with Americans and Israelis interested in bringing land grant programs to the South; interactive map that traces the land's history from the Lower Creek People to present day with infographics on proposed community land grant initiatives in the mid- to late-20th century.

Inescapable Gothic: Faulkner and O'Connor

Produced by Sara A. Lewis and Jay Jennings

Guided by Sara A. Lewis

Humanities Advisers: Sara A. Lewis and Darren E. Grem

What about the works of Southern gothic writers like Flannery O'Connor and William Faulkner resonates with Southern readers, and what is it about the Gothic depictions of the South that attract readers beyond the region? Host Sara A. Lewis will discuss the Southern Gothic aesthetic with contemporary Southern writers and critics. The segment will consult Southern Studies scholar and editor of *Southern Humanities Review* Dr. Katherine Cochran and Dr. Bruce Gentry, editor of the *Flannery O'Connor Review*, on the beginnings of the gothic in Southern literature and what this style transmits within and about the South. Voice actors will read evocative scenes from O'Connor's "A Good Man is Hard to Find" and "Good Country People," Faulkner's *Absalom Absalom*, and other notable works in the genre.

Soundscape: In-studio two-way introduction with Sara A. Lewis and Jay Jennings; interviews with scholars; performed readings from O'Connor and Faulkner; narration by Sara A. Lewis; archival audio of authors engaging their works.

Multimedia: Common read of "Good Country People"; stream performed excerpts; extended interviews with scholars; image gallery of authors and source materials like manuscripts and marginalia.

Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen

Produced by Sara A. Lewis and Hannah Saulters

Guided by Sara A. Lewis

Humanities Advisers: Thomas J. Brown and William Ferris

During the years immediately following the Emancipation Proclamation, many members of the African-American community in Edisto Island, South Carolina, were living free on black-owned property. Thousands of people worked together to build schools and infrastructure as enfranchised citizens on land abandoned by former slave owners and/or gifted by the Union Army. This was the promise of Reconstruction. General O.O. Howard, head of the Freedmen's Bureau, had delivered the news to the community that they owned the land and that the Union Army would protect their interests. But in March of 1865, under the direction of President Andrew Johnson, Howard was ordered to return to Edisto and tell its people that the government planned to reclaim the land and return it to its previous owners, who had been pardoned by the US Government. Gathered in Edisto's church, around 2,000 formerly enslaved people began singing spirituals in a show of resistance. This segment will explore Edisto as ground zero for both the promise and the failure of Reconstruction while demonstrating the importance of music as protest, with specially commissioned performances of "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen" and "Motherless Daughter," and contributions from scholars Thomas J. Brown and Kidada E. Williams.

Soundscape: In-studio two-way introduction with Sara A. Lewis and Hannah Saulters; remote in-studio interviews with scholars; onsite reporting from Reconstruction sites in South Carolina; performed readings of excerpts from the Emancipation Proclamation and writings of President Johnson and General Howard; commissioned performances of spirituals.

Multimedia: Short film of the commissioned performance interwoven with images, documents, and narration to contextualize the songs; full recordings streaming on website; image gallery of primary documents and in-studio performance.

In Cold Blood: Post-Fact

Produced by Sara A. Lewis and Jay Jennings

Guided by Sara A. Lewis

Humanities Adviser: Sara A. Lewis

Engaging Capote's "true" crime book, which he called a nonfiction novel, through the lens of the "post-fact" era. Discussions with Janet Malcolm and Jan Whitt about establishing a baseline for facts and how artistic license is employed by literary writers to invent. To feature voice actors reading source material side by side with Capote's text.

Soundscape: In-studio two-way introduction with Sara A. Lewis and Jay Jennings; remote studio interviews with scholars/experts; performed readings of Capote's work; performed readings of the trial transcript and contemporary newspaper coverage; narration by Sara A. Lewis.

Multimedia: Common read *In Cold Blood*; stream performed excerpts; image gallery of Capote and real-life case; extended interviews with scholars/experts.

Beyond the canon: Anne Spencer

Produced by Eliza Borné and Jay Jennings

Guided by Eliza Borné and Tess Taylor

Humanities Adviser: Sherita L. Johnson

A tribute to poet Anne Spencer (1882-1975), the first African-American woman to be featured in *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry*, who also worked to build Lynchburg, Virginia's first black library and helped found its NAACP chapter. Considered a "Harlem Renaissance house in the South," Spencer's Lynchburg home became a way station and salon for black intellectuals traveling in the dangerous and segregated South, including Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and W.E.B. Du Bois. Despite her accomplishments as a poet and activist, Spencer is little known today, likely because much of her work remains unpublished. "Her traces elude easy literary scholarship," poet Tess Taylor writes in an essay about Spencer in the *Oxford American*. "Her archive is a bouquet of tantalizing fragments, but they are often tucked within sheaves of

undated, sideways notes that are themselves impromptu records of art made in the middle of domestic life—some scrawled on the backs of gas meter bills, grocery lists, recipes for peach pie, or inside the lids of pantyhose boxes.” Taylor will guide this segment, with contributions from Kevin Young, Director of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and Camille T. Dungy, a Professor in the English Department at Colorado State University.

Soundscape: In-studio two-way introduction with Eliza Borné and Tess Taylor; interview with writer/scholars; performed readings of Spencer’s work; narration by Tess Taylor.

Multimedia: Link to Tess Taylor’s *OA* essay; stream performed readings; extended interviews with writer/scholars; image gallery of Spencer, including marginalia.

Terlingua (Marfa), mining town to off-the-grid haven

Produced by Hannah Saulters and Sara A. Lewis

Guided by Hannah Saulters

Humanities Adviser: Alberto Rodriguez and Darren A. Grem

A ghost town repurposed. Once a thriving mercury mining town in South Texas in the late-19th and early-20th centuries, Terlingua has since become a haven for social outcasts and people interested in living off the grid. Hannah Saulters will report in Terlingua and consider how spaces of abandon—long-dead school buses and the holes left in the ground by the mining company—can be repurposed and what in the town’s history anticipated its present, a place without infrastructure, over 100 miles from the nearest major shopping center, and in the middle of a desert with many residents exposed in their makeshift dwellings to deadly animals and weather conditions. Featuring interviews with Alberto Rodriguez and Sul Ross University Professor of History Jorge Hernandez.

Soundscape: Two-way in-studio interview with Sara A. Lewis and Hannah Saulters; onsite reporting in Terlingua including interviews with local and ambient noise; performed readings from archival during the town’s boom; interviews with scholars; narration by Hannah Saulters.

Multimedia: Short film shot in Terlingua featuring interviews with historians at the sites of abandoned mines and historic buildings, juxtaposing images of Terlingua during its boom with Terlingua present; image gallery of Terlingua boom; streaming audio of extended interviews with Terlingua residents.

Santeria, Palo Mayombe, and Ifa

Guided by Monique LaBorde and Jordan Blumetti

Produced by Monique LaBorde and Eliza Borné

Humanities Advisers: Sherita L. Johnson and Alberto Rodriguez

Santeria, known as Lukumi by its followers, is an Afro-Cuban religion that weds Roman Catholicism with the Yoruba tradition of West Africa imported to the Americas during the slave trade. For decades South Florida has fostered an active (but not necessarily open) practice of Santeria and its darker, more obscure relative Palo Mayombe. The strong presence of Santeria and Palo has been rather gruesomely illustrated by animal carcasses strewn about public parks and front lawns of Miami's Cuban neighborhoods. Sacrificial offerings to holy deities are a central practice of the religion, and reports of animal sacrifices, grave robbers, human-skull traders, and illegal slaughterhouses all in the name of Santeria and Palo Mayombe have become more frequent over the last decade, signifying the growing membership and popularity of the religions spun off from the Yorubas. But an increase in popularity has also led to widening rifts and infighting among the different Yoruba faiths in Florida, most notably between Santeria and its forebear Ifa. Jordan Blumetti will report onsite, interviewing practitioners of these religions, Elaine Peña, religious anthropology scholar, and David H. Brown, author of *Santeria Enthroned*.

Soundscape: Two-way in-studio introduction with Monique LaBorde and Jordan Blumetti; onsite interviews with scholars and practitioners; captured audio of ceremonial practices and ambient sounds; narration by Jordan Blumetti; performed readings from religious texts; archival audio or performed readings of media coverage.

Multimedia: Short film on the history of these religions featuring interviews with practitioners and scholars; image gallery of historical photos; weblink to *OA* essay by Jordan Blumetti.