Mississippi Folklife
Volume 28, No. 1
Winter/Spring 1995

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Editor's Note

Welcome to Mississippi FolkLife, a publication that takes the place of the Mississippi Folklore Register as the major forum for the discussion and presentation of ideas, research, and images of Mississippi folk culture. The name change to Mississippi FolkLife better communicates to readers the content of our publication, and the format change more appropriately accommodates photographs and other illustrations to appeal to a broader audience. We will do much more over the next several years to sharpen our focus with adjustments in content and design, and we welcome comments from our readers on ways to make this publication vital and relevant to all who are interested in tradition and change in Mississippi folk culture.

The content of this issue is appropriately diverse. Aimee Schmidt, a native of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, gives us an insightful look at culture and identity in Biloxi's seafood industry in the first of a two-part series. Central to any understanding of folk life and cultural identity is an understanding of the relationship between ethnicity and occupational history. "Down Around Biloxi" offers a historical framework in which to look carefully at the diversity of occupational and cultural life within the maritime traditions of Biloxi.

Mississippi FolkLife will examine shifting symbols within tradition. Anthony James's article on blind Jim Ivy explores the symbolic role Ivy served for an all-white University of Mississippi student body and alumni. Looking at the portrayal of Ivy in University annuals and campus newspapers, James reveals a quintessential symbol of paternalism. With the death and burial of Ivy, argues James, racial propriety at Ole Miss gave way to antagonism and anger.

Perhaps no tradition in this state is more pervasive than hunting. Wiley Charles Prentiss, Jr., an experienced and avid hunter himself, explores the shift in fox hunting, discussing how changes in hunting practices reflect the change in the way people relate to the environment and the land. Looking closely at a community of fox hunters in Copiah County, Mississippi, Prentiss utilizes oral history interviews in an attempt to understand community feelings about this change. Bill Pevy, also a hunter, shares insights on the meaning of the hunt to fox hunters. Additionally, Pevy's tenacious picture research led to this issue's cover photograph.

In 1939 Abbott Ferris accompanied folklorist Herbert Halpert on a folklore collecting tour of Mississippi. Ferris began then working for the Folklore Project. His interest in folklore has continued throughout a distinguished career as a sociologist at Emory University. Returning in recent years to several communities he visited in 1939, Ferris attempts to measure the persistence of gamesmanship among children. His article combines documentary material from 1939 with a look at song traditions among a select group of children today.

Each issue of Mississippi FolkLife will feature a variety of reviews. We encourage submission of publications and media programs for review, and also welcome suggestions of potential reviewers. We also will run announcements, notes, and news in a section entitled "Field Notes."

I want to thank Chuck Yarbrough, Managing Editor of Mississippi FolkLife, for his good work on this issue and Orin Carpenter for layout and design. Thank you for sharing with us your thoughts and ideas on Mississippi FolkLife.

—Tom Rankin

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Mississippi FolkLife is published under the auspices of the Mississippi Folklore Society and the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi. Subscriptions are $20.00 per year, which includes free membership in the Mississippi Folklore Society. Library memberships are $10.00 for life memberships are $10.00. Individual issues, when available, may be purchased for $4.00 per year, excepting "Special Issues," which are $10.00. Subscriptions correspondence, regrets for back issues, and other business should be directed to Mississippi FolkLife, Center for the Study of Southern Culture, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677. Manuscripts, book reviews, and CCC for review, and other editorial correspondence should be sent to Tom Rankin, Center for the Study of Southern Culture, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677. Manuscripts should be submitted on composed disk, preferably either in Microsoft Word or Wordperfect format. Submissions on disk should be on diskette. Copyright 1995

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FOLKART AND ARTISTS SERIES
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Convention's shock aesthetics and primal meanings of body art practiced by punk rockers and neo-tribalists in the youth subculture. $29.95, 115.95 paper

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By Amy V. Kitchener

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By Linda Pershing

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Vietnam Remembered

THE FOLK ART OF MARINE COMBAT VETERAN
MICHAELO D. COUSINS, SR.

By Varick A. Chávez

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To request information about the Folk Art and Artists Series, FolkLife in the South Series, or the forthcoming Traditional and Popular Music Series, please write to John Pritchard, executive editor, at the address below or send a fax to him at attention to 601-952-4117.

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Field Notes

Elder Roma Wilson Receives National Heritage Fellowship

In June, 1994, Elder Roma Wilson was named to receive a National Heritage Fellowship award by the National Endowment for the Arts. An African American Harmonica player from Blue Springs, Mississippi, Wilson was one of eleven folk masters in traditional artforms to receive the award.

"We honor these extraordinary Americans for their lifetime work," said Arts Endowment Chairman Jane Alexander. "They are artists of traditions pure in form and rich in spirit, the wellspring of our diverse American Culture."

As is often the case with music passed on through aural tradition, an artist's creations may become more famous than the artist himself. This is certainly the case with harmonica player, singer, and composer Elder Roma Wilson, whose music is known to listeners of "folk" radio, while he remained in obscurity until being "rediscovered" in the 1980s by his former partner in song, Reverend Leon Pinson.

Roma Wilson was born in 1910 and hails originally from Tupelo, Mississippi. Folklore Worth Long recounts Wilson's early musical life: "Elder Roma Wilson learned to play the harmonica as a boy with old, worn-out horns discarded by his older brothers. He learned to 'choke' these horns in order to get traditional sounds out of them. He was taught by both traditional secular and scared harp masters and became known throughout the state for his version of the song "Thai Tain." A young minister as well as accomplished harpist, Wilson subsequently teamed up with the young, blind, guitar-playing Reverend Pinson to travel around Mississippi and Arkansas, preaching the gospel on the "brass arbect" circuit and playing the religious-inspired music for which they both became known as masters.

In the 1940s, he parted ways with Pinson and moved to Detroit to raise his family, making his living as a street musician on Hastings Street. It was here that Joe Vo Battle, owner of Joe's Record Shop covertly recorded Wilson's astonishing harp-blowing and subsequently released a 78 rpm record of "Life of the Valley" and "Bettter Get Ready," on the Gotham label. These recordings became legendary, and when they were re-released in 1983 by St. George Records, the liner notes stated: "Concerning Elder R. Wilson, nothing of a background nature is available for study. Robert [Richard] remembered recording with a preacher, but sadly nothing else...Hopefully more information will surface on this charismatic preacher who blew harp and quite possibly had the help of ascending masters, as blues legends claim that one sold one's soul to the devil to play that well." Elder Wilson replies: "That isn't true. I'm alive and well in Mississippi and still don't play no blues." Elder Wilson also taught his sons to play the harp, and in another 1940's recording at Joe's Record Shop, he and his three sons made what is now considered to be an important historic 78 rpm release of what Mike Seeger has called "the single most imporant selection by multi-harp players in existence."

Elder Wilson and Reverend Pinson were reunited when Wilson returned to Red Hill, Mississippi, in the 1980s. They have since performed at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, the Chicago Blues Festival, the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife, the National Black Arts Festival, and other major events. In 1991, the Southern Arts Federation took them to venues throughout the South as part of the "Deep South Musical Rooms" tour. Elder Wilson's performances were so popular that he was signed as a co-founder of Pinson's Pinson Music Co., a venue for showcasing local musicians and artists with national appeal.

In 1987 William S. Hays, then Secretary-Treasurer of the Folklore Society, established the George W. Boswell Scholarship Fund. Any donations to the fund in memory of George Boswell should be sent in care of Tom Rankin at the University of Mississippi.

George Worley Boswell, 1920-1995

George Worley Boswell, former professor of English at the University of Mississippi and a respected folklorist, died March 22, 1995 at his residence in Tupelo. Though Boswell had recently moved to Tupelo from Nashville, Tennessee, he was a lifetime resident of Oxford and Professor Emeritus at the University of Mississippi. Educated at David Lipscomb University, Vanderbilt, and George Peabody College for Teachers, Boswell was a prominent member of the Mississippi, Kentucky, and Mississippi Folklore Societies. He was a counselor and a leader of the American Folklore Society, a member of the Modern Language Association and founder of Kappa Delta Pi Honorary Society at Austin Peay. He also founded the Oxford Madrigal Society.

Charles K. Wolfe, folklorist and music historian, has recently completed editing Folk Songs From Middle Tennessee: The George Boswell Collection, which will be published by the University of Tennessee Press. Included in this volume are folk songs Boswell collected in Tennessee during 1948-1958. "As far as I'm concerned," asserts Charles Wolfe, "Boswell was the most important collector of folklore and folk song in Tennessee, and especially in middle Tennessee. Long before other folklorists acknowledged the potential of collecting in urban areas and from professionals, Boswell was collecting in Nashville from doctors at Vanderbilt. He collected songs from the Tennessee River to the Cumberland Plateau and he was the only folklorist to go out and collect from Uncle Dave Macon. He did very important work." In 1897 William S. Hays, then Secretary-Treasurer of the Folklore Society, established the George W. Boswell Scholarship Fund. Any donations to the fund in memory of George Boswell should be sent in care of Tom Rankin at the University of Mississippi.

In the Spirit: Alabama's Sacred Music Traditions

The Alabama Center for Traditional Culture will hold *In the Spirit* May 13 - 14, 1995, at the Gadsden Amphitheatre. The ACTC received a 1995 Cultural Olympiad Regional Designation Award in the Arts from the A.C.O.G. for its exploration of Alabama's rich variety of sacred music. The projects two-day performance celebration will include gospel, Sacred Harp, hymns, Clanton Gospel, Christian Harmony gospel quartet, and Covenrayer psalm singing. A Book of essays and a CD recording will be available May 1st.

For more information call The Alabama Center for Traditional Culture, (334) 242-3601.

Building Named for Vickers

East Central Community College will dedicate its new fine arts center May 6, 1995, in honor of Ovid Vickers, president of the Mississippi Folklore Society. Vickers is retiring after 40 years of teaching on the ECCC campus where he has been an influential teacher of English, Speech, and Drama. Writing in the Clarion-Ledger, Robert McKenzie commented on Vickers and the Center: "If ever there was a more appropriate honor than East Central Community College naming its fine arts center for Ovid Vickers, it doesn't come to mind."
for Biloxi's status as "Seafood Capital of
the World." Biloxi's base immigrants to
the seafood industry, the Vietnamese, arrived during the late 1970s and early 80s and revived the languid industry by accepting jobs in the packing plants. They built their own boats, opened busi-
nesses, and have become a vibrant part of the Biloxi seafood and ethnic community.
In approaching the study of ethnici-
ty in Biloxi or any community, one must not confuse an ethnic group with an
immigrant group. Certainly many of the
customs and traits of an ethnic
group stem from earlier immigrant tra-
ditions. However, in a new environ-
ment and over time an immigrant
group adapts its customs to fit a new
environment. Thus, second, third, and
subsequent generations are not part of
an immigrant group but are a part of an
ethnic group. This is true among Biloxi
Slavonians and Cajuns and is gradually proving so among the Vietnamese who
car-ry on the traditions and music and, and
speech.
An ethnic group shares common
beliefs and properties of living—religion,
customs, literature, cuisine, language.1
Ethnic studies in the South have in
large measure concentrated on the
region's Anglo and African American
traditions and relations, particularly in
terms of the South's agricultural
history. Biloxi, Mississippi, is one city that
stands apart from the pattern of the
Anglo/Afro cultural makeup. This Gulf-
city grew from a small fishing
community and vacation spot to a multi-
ethnic city built around a thriv-
ing seafood industry. Biloxi's geographic
location is largely responsible for its
unique culture. With its economy cen-
tered upon seafood, the port city
attracted diverse peoples, thus creating
an avenue of cultural interaction, which
contributed to the free flowing
exchange of ideas and customs.
Biloxi's multi-ethnic makeup forms a
diverse community who shares a
common knowledge, belief sys-
tem, and way of life. The
The occupational and ethnic
diversity of the seafood community
gives rise to the formation of
Biloxi's ethnic community. Biloxi's
economic development and diversification
have led to the formation of
Biloxi's ethnic community. The
As a result the Biloxi seafood
community has boundaries, those
created by participants them-
Selves and those created by others.
Boundaries help define who they are and
who they are not. Yet, just as cul-
ture is dynamic, so are its boundaries
environing and accommodating or
expanding new forces. These boundaries
have taken different shapes both physical
and cultural, from neighborhoods and life
to the boat and in the factories, to lar-
groups, ethnic and cultural
traditions, and occupational
knowledge. These boundaries help the
community
Biloxi's economic develop-
ment. Many claim that the seafood
industry built Biloxi. The industry
flourished around the turn of the century. Polish
migrants from Baltimore, Slavonian
immigrants, and Louisiana Cajun
pro-
vided the labor that laid the foundations
of new communities.

Editor's Note: This is the first of a two-
part series tracing the rich cultural identity
inherent in Biloxi's Seafood Industry.

When John O. Seeligson, the city
engineer of Biloxi in 1890, surveyed and
drew the official city map, he called
Biloxi "the recognized metropolis of the
Mississippi Gulf Coast." The city-owned
area of over twenty-five miles of streets "all of
which are shielded and well adapted for
vehicles and bicycles." Biloxi boasted a
lovely seacoast drive "passing all the beau-
tiful summer homes of the Southern
privileged class." Furthermore, the city
had "two ice houses and one cold storage
house which answered all the
requirements of a modern city."

Seeligson's exceedingly complimen-
tary description was not far from the truth.
As early as the 1890s Biloxi was one of
the nation's premier resorts. Grand hotels
graced the waterfront, steamers from New
Orleans, Louisiana and Mobile, Alabama
made regular stops in Biloxi, and fresh
seafood was always available. The cool
Gulf breezes and sandy beaches lured
tourists and summer residents to Biloxi,
but the seafood industry was at the core
of Biloxi's economic development.

Many claim that the seafood industry
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tory. Here the number of ethnic groups is fewer, but the basic premise the same: interaction of the ethnic groups helped create a community identity, and occupational links reinforced. The multi-ethnic nature of the seafood industry was present in its beginnings and continues today. Slavonians, Cajuns, and Vietnamese each contributed to the cultural landscape of Biloxi. Their livelihood has been their shared culture, but they also strive to maintain their separate ethnic identities. Biloxi’s history illustrates a continuum of ethnic influences in one Southern port city and how diverse elements fashioned a community identity.

BEGINNINGS

When French explorers landed in the eighteenth century, Indians along the Gulf Coast taught them how to toss for oysters on the offshore reefs and how to catch the many kinds of fish, especially flounder, indigenous to the Gulf Waters. Descendants of these early French settlers still live in Biloxi. The Coast abounds with family names such as Landry, Mortan, and Necaise. They were the first to learn the tools of the trade of the industry. They developed the Biloxi boat-building tradition and later passed this knowledge on to Slavonian immigrants.

The natural landscape of the Biloxi area was conducive to the growth of the seafood industry. The city sits on a peninsula between Biloxi Bay and the Mississippi Sound. The localler refer to “Back Bay” as the land on the Bay side, and the land on the eastern most point facing the Sound is Point Cadet. The barrier islands, Deer, Cat, Ship and Horn, separate the Mississippi Sound from the Gulf of Mexico. West of the islands lie the fertile shrimp and fishing grounds of the Louisiana waters and marshes. The Sound, a broad area of shallow water, is an important ecosystem that supports the food chain essential to the seafood fisheries. At one time the Sound was plentiful with shrimp, fish and oysters. Shrimpers sailed in flat-bottom boats designed for the calmer Sound waters, and oystermen on skiffs could easily reach the shallow reefs. As the number of boats increased, they taxed the supply within the Sound, thus forcing the fishermen to new waters. The Gulf, which lies just beyond the barrier islands, was an untapped source. Motorized wood and steel hull boats and mechanized equipment made it possible to harvest in the Gulf. Today most of the commercial catch comes from Gulf waters.

For much of its early existence, Biloxi was a small fishing town with a few resorts for summer visitors. Fresh seafood was available on the Coast but not inland. The 1869 opening of the railroad that linked Biloxi to inland markets, coupled with the mass production of ice and the introduction of the process of commercially canning shrimp, made it possible for the Biloxi seafood industry to expand and earn the title “Seafood Capital of the World.”

The first seafood canning on the Coast opened in 1881 in Biloxi. The combined talents and investments of several Coast businessmen laid the foundations for the seafood industry. With $5,000 and foresight for a seafood business venture, Latino Lopez, F. William Elmer, W.K.M. DaKare, William Gorenti and James Maycock established Lopez, Elmer and Company. The ethnic make-up of this union embodied the cultural diversity that the industry as a whole would gradually develop.

F. William Elmer of Biloxi and William Gorenti of Bay St. Louis were the only Coast natives in the group. Lopez, a Spanish immigrant, held a successful business in Cobs before coming to the United States. Maycock, a native of Hull, England, came to Biloxi when he was thirteen. The last of the pioneers was W.K.M. DaKare of Fredericksburg, Indiana. DaKare was a key figure in the initial success of the canning industry. In the 1880s, DaKare travelled to Baltimore, Maryland, the nation’s leading city in seafood packing, to study the process and familiarize himself with the equipment. This newly acquired knowledge prepared his company for immediate success.

THE PEOPLE

Slavonians and Louisiana Acadians... they all got along well. Lot of French, lot of Slavonians and some Americans. As they prospered a little more, they moved to other areas. Uptown was the place to live. We were the Point, the factory people.

—Venceslava Koljis Teich

These early ventures paved the way for Biloxi’s economic development. As the industry steadily grew, Point Cadet, then virtually uninhabited, and Back Bay underwent enormous expansion. The population grew along with new construction. Initially Biloxi’s population was not large enough to support the rapid growth and demand for factory employees. Faced with a shortage in the labor force, owners began importing experienced laborers from Baltimore to till the plants. These Polish, or “Bohemians”, seasonal workers were the first large group to move into the city. Owners paid their train passage and housed them in the shotgun houses located near the factories.

The Biloxi seafood camps resembled the paternalistic mill towns that emerged in the Piedmont region of the Southeast. They were self-contained, self-sufficient communities that worked to the advantage of the owners who provided their employees with basic needs. The camps benefited the owners, providing a readily available source of workers. Cheaper rent and a company store that carried basic supplies kept the workforce concentrated in the area around the factories. Perhaps the major benefit to the workers was that they could live near their family and friends. This setting reinforced their ethnic identity and enabled them to retain certain cultural traits and traditions that might otherwise have been lost. It also encouraged an exchange of cultures when Slavonians and Cajun started to live in the camps and afterward because they built their own homes in Point Cadet and Back Bay.

The rapid growth of industry led to a rise in population. The city’s population doubled in a ten-year period and reached 3,234 by 1900. By the turn of the century, Biloxi had five canneries, nine oyster dealers and five “Bohemian camps.” Barataria employed five hundred people, half in the factory and half on the boats. Lopez and DaKare had a fleet of sixty vessels. The camps and the fishing industry flourished.

The decline of the camps and of the paternalistic nature of the industry...
occurred when the industry began to decline at the end of World War I. Prior to that time, the same owner had owned both the boats and the factories. Through their complete control over production and distribution, and their influence over the workforce, the factory owners held the reins on the economic growth and social and cultural development of the industry. The move toward unionization, and the increase in the workforce, especially those interested in owning a boat, challenged the paternalistic management structure. Once several workers, the fishermen were now people who came to Biloxi to make the Gulf Coast city their permanent home. The population increase was due in large part to two immigrant groups; those from the Dalmatian coast of what became Yugoslavia, and the Louisiana Cajuns. These newcomers came from Yugoslavia were mainly Croats, Serbs and Slovenians making up a smaller percentage of the group. The Serbs and Croats are both Slavic groups that populated the Dalmatian Coast along the Adriatic Sea and the inland area of Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Serbia. Though united for almost four hundred years as part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, then as one Yugoslav state following World War I, each ethnic group has a separate, distinctive history. It is difficult to determine how many of the immigrants were Croats, Serbs or Slovenians because nineteenth-century immigrants identified themselves according to the region from which they came: Dalmatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Slovenia. Also, until 1918 the United States Immigration Service did not distinguish between immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian empire. The greatest immigration occurred during the early twentieth-century and immediately after World War I. Many of the immigrants to Biloisi were rural landless peasants, sailors, political refugees, and men avoiding conscription. The prospect of life on the Gulf Coast appealed to Slovenians. By the late 19th century farming groups such as Droborenik established ties with the Gulf and Atlantic states, and by the 1880s, many Slovenians were permanent settlers in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida. Their immigration preceded the birth of the Biloisi fishing industry, but its emergence as a viable economic force attracted more Slovenians to the Coast. Their experience as sailors and fishermen served them well in Biloisi. Even those without experience or English skills could work in the factories and fare well. Family members immigrated one at a time and resettled in Biloisi. Over the years, some Slovenians have kept their ties to the homeland. As one second generation Biloisian said, "The Yugoslavs are 'close knit.' You look after your family no matter where they are." Recently, members of the Slovenian community hosted two men injured in the war in Bosnia. They offered their homes and free medical treatment for the men during their two months of recuperation. Slovenian immigration reached its peak prior to 1917, when the quota still allowed for large numbers. When the government cut the quota, many settled in other countries such as Mexico. A few of those arrived there by mistake. A story told frequently on Founder's Day is that Peter Kulisi, carried his nickname "South American Pete" because he landed in South America, not the American South. The migration of the Cajun (Louisiana French) to Biloisi occurred around the same time the Slovenians immigrated. Cajun's inhabited the southern region of Louisiana about 200 miles from Biloisi. Most of those who moved to Mississippi were rural folk, small farmers, and sharecroppers. The failure of the sugar cane crop in the 1920s put many Cajuns out of work and left them penniless. Biloisi resident Neville "Te-Jim" Browning described this period when he was four years old. As he recalls, dire economic conditions motivated his family and others like them to seek better opportunities elsewhere. They showed up as sharecroppers. He'd work and work and at the end of the year he never saw any proceeds. He was under their control. Like the song, 'owed everything to the company store.' So we moved. Many families came over here in 1925. The failure of the sugar cane crop coincided with a period of enormous growth in the Biloisi seafood industry. Factory owners were south Louisiana cities such as New Iberia, Lafayette, and Broussard to recruit workers. Large numbers of Cajuns migrated to Biloisi in search of economic opportunity. The move not only provided jobs opportunities, but also put them in contact with other ethnic groups. Radio announcers from its roots and no longer insulated in isolated farm communities, the Cajun culture in Biloisi continued to change and was transformed over the years. Thus, a Cajun culture unique to the Coast developed within the Biloisi seafood industry. Slovenians and Cajuns' entered the profession basically at the same level—-as fishermen or factory workers. Although some Slovenians had maritime experience, they were not experienced in the marine environment. Each group had to adapt to a different working environment, which included working among various ethnic groups. Even if they didn't crew on the same boats, they worked for the same factories and came in daily contact on the docks, in camps, and in the neighborhoods. As many Biloisians remember, the Slovenians and Cajuns mingled freely, but in the early years tension and competition existed. Both groups had to work in the factories with the women until they were old enough to go on the boats. They lived as sharecroppers keeping the boat clean, calling the catch, and earning their pay selling the fish caught in the nets. Gradually, they developed their own methods of working on board. The boat was both living and working quarters, and everyone had to know his job and place in order for the work to go smoothly. Time spent on board as a child was a period of apprenticeship as young boys learned the skill and earned the knowledge from the more experienced men. Biloisi and other Coast fishermen designed boats specifically suited to their needs, and the fishermen's success was measured. Flattboat double-sail boats called cat- boats were the most common boats used in the earliest days but later in the northeast, the gallery boat supplanted them. Schooners, because of their size and sail power, replaced catboats as the vessel of choice. When Hurricane in 1935 destroyed a large portion of the fleet, boatbuilders replaced their losses with a new type of boat known as the Biloisi schooner. Similar to the Chesapeake and Baltimore schooner, the Biloisi had a broad beam for large crews, a shallow draft suited to inshore bodies of water, and sail power enough to drag the oyster dredges and shrimp nets. Builders cycled from the Louisiana Louisiana to Mississippi, and Mississippi yellow pine keel, sails, and spars. They ranged in size from fifty to sixty feet long. The largest ever built, the Mary Margaret (65'), could carry five hundred barrels of oysters. Schooners also served as freight boats carrying lumber, charcoal and fruit between New Orleans and Mobile. Although they were good work boats and heavy weather ships, they earned the nickname of "white winged queens" because of their grace and beauty under sail. Boat building, another occupation tied to the industry, was carried on independently. Once again, as with shrimping and oyster- ing, young men learned boat skills, design, and building through an apprenticeship period. Boat building was a tradition in some Biloisi families as fathers taught their sons the trade. The Covcevich family founded their boat yard in Back Bay in 1896. "I built plenty of boats, God knows," said eighty-six year old Anthony "Jack" Covcevich, whose father and grandfather started the business. Tony Jack's brother Neil owns Bay Marine at Point Cadet, and a deceased brother, John, built and designed model boats. Tony Jack Covcevich began as a teenager building model boats improving on the designs his
father built. His father recognized his talent and had Tony Jack design all his boats. Covacevich has launched over one hundred and fifty boats of all types from schooners to mine sweepers. He loved building wooden boats, but those days are gone, he says. The scarcity of good wood, such as cypress and pine, makes those wooden boats that exist very precious indeed. Covacevich’s last wooden boat, which he completed in 1969, survived Hurricane Camille and is still at sail in Florida.

During the summer months the fisherman laid their nets to rest and allowed the shrimp crop to propagate. Some men spent the off-season working odd jobs such as house painting, but mainly they prepared for the next season. They mended nets, fixed equipment, and hauled the boats out of the water for cleaning and repair. The rest of the refurbishing efforts was racing, and schooner racing developed as a new recreational activity tied to Biloxi’s seafood industry.

Although technically fishermen were competing for a catch as they worked, everyone was a winner who brought in a catch. Schooner racing, however, was a different story. Turning work vehicles into competitive machines, the races became as important as working itself. Prowing one’s boat during the races was a crucial step in becoming a good fisherman. Rivalry was keen as the fastest boat from each community competed against the others. At times contests grew so heated they resulted in shooting matches, a bow and arrow through a competitor’s sail, and shotgun blasts fired across the bow of a rival boat. The community turned out for the events as well to cheer on friends and families of the factory boat. The fishermen who raced and the community members who watched affirmed and celebrated their unique maritime way of life.

By the mid 1930s the white winged shrimp queens had virtually disappeared. Power boats were the way of the future for the shrimp industry, and fishermen displayed an ability to adapt to changing needs. Most owners simply converted their schooners to power boats by cutting off the masts and installing engines. Boat builders later designed a power boat known as the Biloxi lugger. On this boat the cabin rests stern and the feedstock is clear for unloading and offloading the catch. By 1935 power boats had taken over shrimping, but schooners remained in use for oystering. However, in 1933 the Mississippi Seafood Conservation laws approved power boat dredging, and the Biloxi schooner lost its economic importance and disappeared for the most part.

Despite technological advances, work life essentially did not change. Whether aboard the schooners or the Biloxi luger, work was still physically demanding, and the philosophy remained the same. Work on a Sunday, work on a holiday, work when the weather was good, and work even when the weather was not so good. Work was non-stop, said retired fisherman Louis Tekiely: “It was around clock. The boats were always busy. If they weren’t shrimping, they were dredging.”

Almost every moment on board entailed some sort of work: mending or setting nets, clearing the deck or cleaning the catch. Crew members constantly practiced and honed their skills. As to reaffirm this image of “all work and no play,” fishermen say they had little time for pleasure or social activity on board. Carl Smith, recalling the occasional guitar playing and cards filled in the few spare moments. Those who smoked stuck up on cigarettes and maybe a little wine for meals before leaving shore.

Biloxi fisherman emphasized they had no time on board to be lazy or rest, however, meals times provided the only escape from work. The Biloxi Schooners had only a charcoal stove with room for one pot. The cook, an awful crew man, prepared everything in that one pot, shrimpling style (one ingredient over another in the same pot). Of course, the typical menu included shrimp and oysters, shrimp or oyster spaghetti, gambas, jamboyla, court-bouillon, and the Yugoslav bachelor (dried fish) were common meals. The Biloxi bakers made a special bread for

...Maybe that Queen will one day be me.

The first weekend in May, Biloxi shrimpers gather their boats outside the small craft harbor for their annual Blessing of the Fleet. St. Michael Catholic Church on Biloxi Point Oulet is the way of other outfitted equipment. Despite technological advances, work life essentially did not change. Whether aboard the schooners or the Biloxi luger, work was still physically demanding, and the philosophy remained the same. Work on a Sunday, work on a holiday, work when the weather was good, and work even when the weather was not so good. Work was non-stop, said retired fisherman Louis Tekiely: “It was around clock. The boats were always busy. If they weren’t shrimping, they were dredging.”

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the fishermen called "boat bread" which sold for a nickel a loaf. Boat bread or hard tack accompanied every meal. While the meal was sure to get the palate, the choice of beverages usually did not vary; coffee, Bax's rootbeer (originated and brewed in Biloxi), or cola water (sweet water) with a little water in it, "so it don't make you doopy."

Time and again one hears of the culinary talents of the Biloxi fishermen who furnished their own choice of favorite scotch a boit. Even today at the St. Louisian, the Lause of the Le, Club, or at home the men will take charge of the kitchen. Steve Treborich was the cook on board a boat for eleven years, and still cooks today. When I interviewed him and his brother, Steve was busy preparing gamo. Louis testifies that Steve was the best cook on the water. Steve said he had no choice in the matter, but now he enjoys shar-

IN THE FACTORY

Just everybody had to work to make a living because then you got paid very little for what you done. And the first job I had was in the shell mills, grinding up shells and that was 94.00 an hour.
—Clarence Disilvey

While shrimping and oystering were exclusively male tasks, the factory work was predominantly the female domain. Some men did work in the factories and most children, including boys, began their career in the factory where they cut their teeth on the skills and work ethic necessary to make it in the industry. Documentary photographer Louise Fili photographed young workers in Biloxi in the 1880s and exposed the harsh conditions under which they worked. As the boys grew older most took jobs on the boats while the women stayed in the factories. Since the factories lacked nurses, women brought their sick children to work with them. They constructed play pens or put the children on the floor next to them where they learned how to do their own work. Although people often tend to glorify the "good ole' days," when Biloxians speak of the early days in the seafood industry, they temper remarks on the abundance of the supply with memories of long hours, little pay, and child labor. Mary Kulja, a woman seventy years of age, recounted over fifty of her six-year-long years in the seafood factories, recalling her work:

The first job I had was in the factory, in the cannery where they had oysters and shrimp...They had so many and so many oysters they couldn't take care of them. They sometimes had to throw them away because there wasn't enough workers to do the job. So they brought children, twelve, thirteen years old to work.

Children age fourteen could receive a work card which allowed them to work legally in the factory, but most had a factory job at an even younger age. When inspectors came to check work cards, the underage children would hide near the edges of the factory and slip away from the factory. They faked their age to get a work card instead.

They worked their children and sent them out to school. They worked very hard and wrapped their legs in newspaper to keep warm. Their hands grew cold during working with the icy shrimp, hour after hour. One woman recalled how her mother would bring bowls of hot water from home for her children to warm their hands in. She worked her hands raw during shrimp season, and women stood on either side of the tables to "handleless" and pick the shrimp. She knelt down and swept up after. Although it might appear as though they worked as a team, each was paid according to the amount of shrimp they picked and thus received for their individual work. That is why the women who worked a cart usually worked together all the time. When they had done their work, they tended to be friends or relatives, sometimes all Slavonian or all Cajuns.

The factory work was similar to the apprenticeship period on the boats. Young boys were learning by watching and imitating the hands of the experienced older workers. Eventually it became second nature. To pass the time the women cooked a small pizza on a brick oven. If they were all Slavonian or Cajun they might speak in their native tongue. A sense of community existed both in and out of the factory, and they were all united by the common bond of sharing work with them, not that they took their jobs any less seriously than the men, but the work arrangement allowed for more social insertion.

During the first half of the 20th century the Biloxi seafood industry and women's role in the community were steadily evolving. Development in technology and changes in the ethnic milieu created a dynamic industrial and cultural community that continues today. Biloxi schooner gave way to larger vessels and was re-established in the late 1970s and re-named as community cultural campus and historic attraction. The Slavonians and Cajun's created ethnic organizations to maintain their identity. In the 1970s Vietnamese refugees become the latest ethnic group involved in the Gulf Coast seafood industry, and they, too, would form a new community and maintain their identity through family, religious, and cultural traditions. This diversity and development that marked the Biloxi seafood industry in the late 19th century 1900's would continue, then, and take on new manifestations in the latter part of the 20th century.

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4. "Creoleization" as defined by Reinecke is the synthesis of the various cultures in the unique New Orleans melting pot as they interacted one by one with the original French, Franco-American or Afro-French population. George E. Reinecke, "The National and Cultural Groups of New Orleans," in Louisiana Folklore ed., Nicholas Spitzer (Baton Rouge: Louisiana Folklore Program/Division of the Arts, 1985), 5.


6. Rather than distinguish between the different ethnic groups, Biloxians often use the terms interchangeably. Most of them are Croats, but they are frequently called the "Slavonian" or "Slavic" as blanket terms. This probably occurred because the name of their social club is the Slavic Benevolent Association, or the Slavonian Lodge as it is known. In this paper I use the term "Slavonian" in the same manner Biloxians do. Again, however, the majority of them are of Croatian descent.

8. Theriot, 249.

9. Peter Burtonovich, interview by H.T. Holmes, Jr., 20 June 1973, transcript, City of Biloxi, Mississippi Public Library, Oral History Collection, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi.


13. The American Numon Institute has registered this type boat under the name "Biloxi Schooner.


Blind Jim as Rebel fan, candy vendor, and counselor created an illusion of racial intimacy for the university community. This intimacy between Blind Jim and alumni and students was based on a pattern of Old South paternalism. While Blind Jim adhered to the paternalism extended by Ole Miss and clearly benefitted from the care and concern it brought him, the university community used this relationship to bolster its idea of the "southern way of life" and defend its segregated practices.

Jim Ivy first appeared on campus in 1896, "wandering" into the baseball stadium during an Ole Miss game with the University of Texas. Unfortunately, the home squad trailed far behind the Texans. After hearing the linuxed score from several students, Blind Jim game played on the campus and went to countless road games played by the Rebels. The student newspaper reported Blind Jim even painted his home on the outskirts of Oxford red and blue to demonstrate school spirit.

Blind Jim not only attended numerous athletic events, but also participated heavily in pre-game festivities, especially the pep-rally. From 1943 to 1954 Ole Miss students from the yearbook included nine photographs of pep-rally scenes showing Blind Jim. These photographs depicted Blind Jim at pep-rally in Fulton Chapel, the Peabody Hotel in Memphis, Tennessee, and at various outdoor locations.

The pep-rolls in Fulton Chapel followed a prescribed pattern. Blind men and cheerleaders congregated on the stage to lead students in song and yell. University officials and guests, including Blind Jim, sat to the middle of the stage. Ole Miss administrators did not condone a special section on stage for Blind Jim, but instead allowed him to sit amidst the white students. Though we are unsure of Blind Jim’s spoken words, photographs confirm he served as a focal symbol of the spirit for the student body, participating in the pep-roll programs, leading yell with the Ole Miss cheerleaders, and leading cheer of “Hooray Teddy.”

In 1896 baseball game, became a trademark to university students. One newspaper article suggests he fashioned an original cheer: “Hammas Yellow Hammer, Down with Alabama.”

Despite the fact that Ole Miss played several of its home games in Memphis, Blind Jim was the designated game and received pep-in-nellies in the lobby of the Peabody Hotel. Blind Jim amid the boopie.

Although photographs from the yearbook never showed Blind Jim speaking, we do document his presence and participation. Other photographs reveal Blind Jim’s presence in scenes where he often had a conspicuous role.

Photographs from yearbooks illustrate how thoroughly Ole Miss incorporated Blind Jim into the athletic life of the university. His move from mere spectator at a baseball game in 1896 to sitting on the sidelines at football games, speaking before the student body and participating in Fulton Chapel, and attracting widespread attention in pre-game gatherings at the Peabody Hotel represent a scalable relationship over time and a high level of racial tolerance by white students, administrators and staff. Paternalism, however, soundly documented.

Paternalism emerged prior to the Civil War in the “organic society” idealized by southern planters. In the organic society the plantation operated as an organism. Every person held a special function insuring society’s stability. Stepping out of one’s societal position disrupted the “organism,” rendering it inefficient or unproductive. White masters guided the organic society by exerting power over their slaves. A paternalistic view of slaves as childlike, submissive, dependent, and harmless tempered and redirected this power. Eugene Genovese wrote, “southern paternalism had little to do with Ole Miss’s ostensible benevolence, kindness, and good cheer. It grew out of the necessity to discipline and morally justify a system of exploitation.”

Paternalism entered the University of Mississippi at its opening in 1843 as dozens of planters sons embarked on educational journeys. The university’s persistent use of paternalism continued as its relationship with Blind Jim developed. Jim Ivy’s blindness compounded this paternalism. Ivy’s early life record detailed the loss of his eyesight. Born
life. The boys of Ole Miss would fight for him." Home stated. A 1934 article by W.M. Reed stated, "The Ole Miss boys and officials are mighty kind to Blind Jim. They pass things on to him and he is happy in his service to the institution - ah Ole Miss." This comment suggests a relationship in which "Blind Jim" and the university offered equal service and shared appropriate rewards. This mutualism, however, did not exist. The service Blind Jim rendered to Ole Miss exceeded that of the gain.

Thirdly, Ole Miss engaged in paternalistic actions towards Blind Jim. One example of this paternalistic spirit surfaced in the fall of 1936. After learning that Blind Jim faced foreclosure proceedings if he did not meet payments on an outstanding loan, the editor of the Mississippian organized a collection campaign. An article cultivating sympathetic donors stated, "the old negro bought a lot with the borrowed collateral and erected a shack thereon. It is a place he calls, 'home', in a one-room shanty. Blind Jim's financial woes have forced the notion of his dependence upon whites. To save Ivy's 'shanty' the Mississippian appealed to students, "it is up to the college students to buy this property to prevent this tragedy from occurring. Blind Jim has been a vital part of this institution for many years, and his troubles are the troubles of every Ole Miss student. It is up to the students to see that he retains his home." A similar plea for Blind Jim appeared in the Memphis Commercial Appeal several weeks later.

Ole Miss students and alumni responded accordingly. O.B. Boone, Jr. mailed one dollar to Blind Jim and wrote in an enclosed letter, "I am very proud to give this to you...and I hope that you will receive enough to live comfortably the rest of the days he shall live." Students, alumni, and friends contributed $425.00 to aid Blind Jim. One New York alumnus donated a large portion of this sum. Donations from areas ranging from one dollar to four dollars and contributions in the amount of $3.05 from the black cafeteria staff also added to the total. In late November the Mississippian announced that Blind Jim's financial woes had subsided. An editorial from the Jackson Daily News reprinted in the Mississippian continued.

Listen, all ye white folks who dwell above the Mason and Dixon line:

Down here we love our negroes and we love our white folks. We are willing and ready to go to the limit for them and they are ready and willing to do the same thing for us.

The home of "Blind Jim" will be his own so long as he lives. That also goes for his blind wife.

You can't understand that.

No use for any Yankee trying to understand.

This defense of segregation in the mid-1930's continued well into the 1950's. The South indeed possessed a special way of dealing with a select group of its blacks—paternalism. While Blind Jim emancipated himself within this system, to gain immemorial privileges and benefits, he also reinforced white Mississippi's paternalism.

Blind Jim challenged Ole Miss' paternalism when he forged a business for himself on campus as food vendor to students and staff. Starting small, Ivy first rooted peanuts, which he bagged and placed in large straw bales. He then sold the peanuts at the athletic events he attended, and around campus. By 1938 Blind Jim expanded beyond the peanut market by offering Mounds and other candies for sale. Photographs depicting Blind Jim as "businessman" were made between 1926-1938 and suggested that Blind Jim worked for his keep while able. Several photographs included his basket containing the food goods, most likely peanuts. Obviously, joking about the size and capacity of both Blind Jim and his business venture, the 1931 Ole Miss "played" along at the paternalistic game they had devised identifying Blind Jim with the title "Big Businessman."

While Blind Jim moved his enterprise to the university cafeteria in his later years, he first operated either on the Lyceum steps or within its halls. Photographs depict by reenacting with his全景 on the Lyceum steps. Ivy's business, like any, experienced ups and downs. World War II proved a difficult period. Rationing and shortages limited Blind Jim's candy and peanut supply, reducing his profit potential. One student named Blind Jim one of the "many big businessmen feeling the pinch of the war." Rather than lose his business (or profit), Blind Jim welcomed donations during this period, thus effectively reinforcing the "dependence, financially unstable image" first glaringly apparent during the house foreclosure proceedings of the 1936-1937 school term. Despite blindness, students respected Blind Jim enough they never short-changed or took advantage of him.

Ivy's presence on the Lyceum steps offered a powerful and conflicting image. One, it represented a cooperation with power, the Lyceum holding the offices of the administrative staff of the university. Secondly, his business dealings on the Lyceum steps suggested a tacit approval by the administration of some forms of black entrepreneurship, albeit ones that held no particular threat to the local white economy. Viewed in the Old South context, Blind Jim assumed a much darker role by operating from the Lyceum steps. The Lyceum itself replicated the image of the plantation big-house, and the figure of Blind Jim on the front steps neatly fit the image of the appreciating and loyal slaves. Blind Jim provided Ole Miss with its own living and breathing lackey, instead of the ceramic and ill-painted new-south versatise. Blind Jim's presence at the Lyceum, perhaps chosen for its centrality on campus, offered too great an opportunity to fulfill the stereo-
types and images of the Old South.

Finally, Ivy held the role of counselor. Blind Jim served unofficially as the "Dean of Freshmen" at Ole Miss. Blind Jim proclaimed himself as Dean of Freshmen soon after his arrival and adoption by the school. "Ie, the Dean," said Blind Jim, "and about the first thing I've going to do is make a speech to the freshmen Thursday night. Ie going to tell them just exactly what's expected of them and what's not expected of them, so they won't get into any trouble." One tradition of Oxford merchants included sponsoring a party to welcome incoming students at the beginning of each school year. At the 6th annual "Welcome Reception" party in 1954, Blind Jim addressed the throngs of gathered students.

Blind Jim's role is intermediary for the white freshmen into their new environment of college, offers a comparison with Uncle Remus. Every white southern child, pre-1955 and probably after, either heard about or saw on the screen the kind, gentle, old black man who picked up the young master's Horn, who, while holding him on his knee, told him animal tales with a moral message of survival. Blind Jim played in Uncle Remus role at Ole Miss. Descriptions of his physical image portrayed the gentleman and wisdom of age. "Blind Jim's tall, erect figure became a human landmark on campus," remarked one student. "His hair and mustache finely trembled snow white as he became enthralled with age." A resolution adopted by the Alumni Association at Ivy's death noted his "cheerfulness, good humor and dignity."

In this "Uncle Remus" role Blind Jim instructed the freshman class on how to fit in and survive at Ole Miss: "Homogeneity is what your class is," Blind Jim was telling Freshman...
ultimately, Blind Jim served as a symbol of racial oppression. For white Mississippians, Blind Jim symbolized the "good Negro"; subordinate, cheerful, and dependent. During this time period white Mississippians, like other southerners, responded to racial events with mixed emotions. For most white southerners the only black models available for approval included the "good Negro" and the "black brute," or as Joel Williamson would identify these white southerners conceptualizing this idea, the "conservatives" and the "radicals."" During Blind Jim's tenure at Ole Miss he enjoyed the praise of the "conservative" southern mind. However, while the same mind may adore Blind Jim, the "radical" portion of that mind criticized the trial of the white men involved in the murder of Emmett Till, and later fought vigorously to keep Ole Miss from executing as well as Blind Jim served for, white southerners, as a convenient token. As long as they petted him, stroked him, and treated him in an affectionate manner, criticism of the South's or Ole Miss' racial standards, segregation, or the mutilating epitome of 'Negro' could be deflected.

In mid-September of 1955, Blind Jim accompanied several Ole Miss students to Atlanta to attend the Ole Miss football game. Segregation forced the white students to find a place for Blind Jim to sleep at the Negro YMCA. Ivy reassured the young men that they need not return the next day to pick him up, that he would find a ride to the game from someone, "On the way back [to Oxford] we asked [Blind Jim] what he thought of our football team. Then we learned that he had not been to the game. No one would take him. He gave no outward appearance that he was upset, but still we wondered if he did not feel disappointed," commented one of the students.

The Atlanta incident showed the "silence" imposed by self-incriminating standards of racial conduct. Perhaps if Blind Jim had been allowed to stay with the white students he would not have been left for the court to criticize segregation, however, required self-criticism and a self-examination that would have yielded incongruity and further psychological and social death of Blind Jim in 1955, just one year after the Brown v. Board of Education decision, released Ole Miss from the responsibilities of paternalism. When Ole Miss buried Blind Jim, it also buried racial propriety and thus allowed racial antagonism, frustration, and fury to move to center stage.

**Endnotes**

4. "Jim Gave All His Affection," Mississippi date unknown; Wallace Sherwood, "Sherwood Forest," Mississippi Folklife; "Mississippi Folklife, Spring '55."
Historical Sign

(Marking for Passerby an Abandoned Plantation House in the Mississippi Delta)

1. Once overworked by black men, this plantation is no longer overseen by white men, it is overlooked by everyone; driven, when they venture from the interstate, race by this plantation hove on their way to Staxer's—distracted by their stomachs, they seldom notice the fading highway historical signs...

2. Whatever the State may say, these columns are not Greek, these are the flagpoles of a forgotten nation—
one that surrendered its offensive flag to save its estates from reconstruction...

3. They loved their plantation, those who owned this place, while those who worked here hurt too much to hate it, so this plantation survived the changing of the laws without changing, the house and barn whitewashed to mask the War's wounds. But one man couldn't keep it up—he lost his crops to worms, then the sun deserted him, his pride mixed with whiskey, he chanced down the road past empty shadows, to the river, where he slept, waiting for the day. When first light flooded the fields, his wife woke up alone, her husband, her Bible, gone; she prayed, then saw the God was on the bank: his overgrown boat...

4. The sign does not say so but this plantation, once overworked by blacks and overseen by whites, still is understood by no one...

—Ted Olson

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Mississippi Folklife
For many people, fox hunting conjures up images of red-clad gentry riding to hounds. Yet in Mississippi, fox hunting was a part of an informal rural tradition in which local hunters gathered at a good geographical vantage point to simply listen to their hounds run a fox. In South Mississippi, a group of fox hunters cling to their association despite reversals in wildlife populations, altered interpretations of property rights and changing rural lifeways. This article traces traditional fox hunting in Mississippi from its origin as a communal rural past-time pursued in the open countryside and describes how its devotees adapted it to large fenced areas known as fox pens. Interviews with the participants allow the hunters themselves to describe the forces that influenced fox hunting and their reactions to them. The interviews offer insight into the changing natural and cultural environment of the state and suggest reasons for the resilience of fox hunting as a rural activity.

The Fred Pevey Memorial Fox Hunters Association evolved out of this tradition and is typical of many fox hunting groups around the state. Organized first as the Copiah County Fox Hunters Association in the first decades of the twentieth century, by 1938 the group was renamed the Aloe N. Parker Fox Hunters Association in honor of a local aviation and fox hunter. The organization served as means of bringing local fox hunters together for a field trial where judges evaluated the performance of members' hounds according to the rules and point system of the National Foxhunters Association, Copiah...
Prety held up his hand, a hound "quit" or gave up the race. The practice of fox hunting was purely a sporting ritual enjoyed by those who, while often not wealthy, at least possessed the time and resources to make capture of edible game unimportant. In fact, while the hounds probably felt differently, the object of the hunters was never to catch the fox but only to listen to their dogs run settlement in the late nineteenth century. Deer, hares, pheasants and turkeys all adapted poorly to intensive clearing and farming. As large game disappeared, red and grey foxes filled an important niche in the environment. The mechanized cotton culture. They adapted perfectly to the familiarized area and red fox, especially provided an excellent base for hunting. With the absence of deer in settled areas of Mississippi, the hounds used the turn of the century to the fifties and sixties, hunters were reasonably sure that when released their dogs, the track they struck would be that of a fox. In addition, fox hunters faced little opposition from landowners. Until the seventies, ported land was unheard of in most fox hunting areas. Landowners generally looked on hunting as a communal right within the rural community and they allowed and usually encouraged fox hunting on their land. Gatherings of fox hunters usually included landowners with their hounds although landownership was in no way required. Fox hunting groups reflected those in the local community immersed in fox hunting and possessed of enough time and resources to pursue it. Although the cost of upkeep of hounds that pursued no edible game usually excluded the very poor, fox hunters represented a broad spectrum of the middle and upper classes. Red foxes are creatures of woodland and forest areas and large areas are required to run them, few types of hunting better illustrate the once cohesive rural community than fox hunting. David Hunter points out for example, "When we hunted outside, you just threw 'em in the truck and go over to a certain spot, back in them days most people didn't care if you were running on their property. Be glad, most of the time they was glad for you to come hunt and chase the fox. It may be catchin' his chickens, or number of fox hunters left the sport, some took up deer hunting or raccoon hunting, but a few continued to hunt through the development of large fenced enclosures where they might run their hounds without fear of deer, cats, cane property owners. Fenced enclosures "fox pen" sprung up all over the South in response to the problems of hunting "outside". Leon Canary, a Fred Pevy Association fox hunter and successful board breeder, described the sometimes desperate situations that drove fox hunters "inside." The pens, for now days, was the greatest thing that happened to fox hunters," Canary explains.

The specific time varied with each locality in Mississippi but sometime in the 1970s fox hunting in the open countryside became almost impossible. The fox hounds often disappeared while chasing buck, succumbing to cars while crossing Indian highways, or following their game onto lands posted against trespassers where their masters could not retrieve them. Large hunters "inside." "The pens, for now days, was the greatest thing that happened to fox hunters," Canary explains.

The fox hounds had been more than a pastime. And that's why fox pens was built. But it had gotten to the point you couldn't hunt outside with any pleasure. Either somebody was threatening to shoot you or your dogs 'cause they was 'gain across an acre of land or something, you know. Or either be's on a highway or somebody leased up a deer club for deer, and they didn't want your dogs on there... A lot of people in town moved out and bought nine acres lots or two acre lots, and they [those lots] became their "Ponderek." And if anything walked across their place they wanted to kill it or call the law. And it put a danger on a lot of things because folks would shoot at you. Then I come out on the road and cuss you out. So the pen really was our salvation." Salavation consists of large areas from 100 to well over 1,500 acres enclosed by a wire fence at least eight feet high. Pen owners purchase foxes and more often coyotes (or trap their own) to stock the enclosures. Hunters are charged a fee to hunt, usually around five dollars for each hound they release in the pen. Automatic feed dispensers provide food for the foxes and coyotes in the pens which are usually surrounded by rows of high fences or wire, areas inaccessible to the dogs where tiring animals may escape the bounds for a time. It wasn't exactly an experience much removed from a traditional hunt but most fox hunters, if given a choice, would prefer to hunt on the "outside." Speaking from experience, "It's nothin' perfect...no the be we got though...If I had the choice, I'd run outside, you know. If it was a big problem, I'd run outside, to where you could hunt just as you wanted."

Another hunter felt that the pens still offered "Friendship and camaraderie, but it's not
Standing at the cashier’s window in the Copiah Bank in Crystal Springs one Friday afternoon I noticed the antique, glass-top dual telephones in the corner. The Bank was celebrating its 100th anniversary and was displaying an assortment of memorabilia. After completing my transaction, I stepped over to take a look at the display. I was immediately struck by a photograph. The old brown tone picture showed a group of about 40 men with most of them in the front row holding dogs on leashes. Two old men flanked the dog on the left and right. The front row of men stood in a gravel street. The remainder of the men in the picture were standing on the sidewalk, elevated some 12 inches above those on the front.

The photograph was taken in Crystal Springs in 1940. The Crystal Cafe prominent in the background. Seeing the name of the cafe on the window brought back vague memories of visiting there as a child with my father.

Standing second from the right in the photograph is a man who appears to be about forty years old. He is wearing a canvas hunting cap and a lightweight jacket zipped halfway, pants, and leather boots that reach almost to his knees. He holds two dogs on a leash. While I had never seen this picture before I recognize it as my father, Fred Pevey, taken some ten years before I was born.

Others on the front row are also familiar. My Uncle Dick, who instilled in me a love for hunting and fishing and a respect for nature, stands down from my dad. Many times I have watched anxiously for the sound of Uncle Dick’s old dog in the gravel, dreaming of the long stringer of brook trout we would eventually have at the end of the day. The enduring mark of that brother and peering over that brother’s shoulder is my grandfather.

I was pretty sure that all these men were fox hunters since my father had been an avid fox hunter all of his life. What then was the occasion of this photograph? Over the three year period it took me to get a copy of the photograph, I learned some important information about these hunters. My aunt Irene passed away in 1990 at the age of 92, and in some of the things she had accumulated over the years were the minutes of the Copiah County Fox Hunters Association for the years 1936 to 1938. She had been the secretary of the association.

During a meeting in 1936 a motion had been made that the name of the group be changed to the Alton N. Parker Hunter. The motion was seconded, voted on, and passed. Parker was a local citizen and had grown up in Crystal Springs. He had been a Naval Aviator and was part of Admiral Richard Byrd’s expedition to the South Pole. In fact, he was the first man to set foot on Antarctica.

Along with that information I had also acquired many old family photos. Among these was a time-worn brown envelope with “Hamiliton’s Studio” written on the front. Hamilton’s was the local photographic studio for many years. Inside the envelope were two 8 x 10 negatives. One of these showed a man wearing a navy uniform and the other picture a trophy. On the back of the envelope, written in long hand, was Alton Parker’s name. A checkmark at the old photograph taken in front of the Crystal Cafe, I see what is now another familiar face. Dressed in a suit and tie, Alton Parker, is the man standing next to my father. Forty years later the name of the association would be changed to the Fred Pevey Fox Hunters Association.

While interviewing various people in an attempt to identify individuals in the photograph, I heard many wonderful stories. Most were about hunting in general and fox hunting in particular, while some were concerned with individual hunters, favorite dogs, and special hunts that men remembered in great detail. Although they took place as long as fifty years ago. But all the men share a common outlook.

Fox hunting stories from these men declare an obvious love of the sport. In addition, their stories and approach to hunting clearly reflect an understanding and a respect for the game that they pursue. The fox was a revered part of the equation. No one purposely killed or endangered the fox.

Their activity was not then and is not now a sport of willful destruction. To the contrary, fox hunting is a sport that promotes the protection of wildlife, the fostering of breeding, raising, and running good hounds, doing everything possible to take care of and nourish the very game that is hunted with such care.
most hunters raised their own fox hounds and this practice is still important to many people. The challenge of raising the hounds that will result in a combination of the best characteristics of the sire and the dam is one of the most powerful attractions of fox hunting. Bill Pevey recalled that the successful outcome of a match, known to hunters as a "looking a good cross," was a major factor in his father's love of fox hunting. The search for a good cross is very much a part of fox hunting today. Much of the talk of fox or fox pens revolves around hunters discussing crosses among their own hounds or discussing the desirable traits or hounds among those at stud with professional breeders. With stud fees of around $100 to $150 and puppy prices from $75 to $125, serious hunters can obtain part of the more popular bloodlines for relatively reasonable amounts. Even though successful breeders do a brisk business in odd sales and puppies, raising hounds usu- ally constitutes only a hobby or a part-time job, and thus allows them more involvement with fox hunting. One of the most common reasons why fox hunters offer for continuing the chase is the camaraderie they enjoy at the pen hunts and field trials. Hunters describe a fellowship absent of distinctions between the wealthy and the poor and claim that while hunting, the common bond of the fox hunt supercedes one's social status. Laura Matthews and others maintain lifelong friendships as part of their devotion to fox hunting: "It is like a family reunion for me. I know just about everybody that comes to these field trials." The fox pens make possible the "get together" of the fox hunting community and their popular- ization has brought many old houndsmen back into the sport and recruited a num- ber of young people. Hunters generally perceive the interest in their sport as growing or at least stable after a long period of decline. Some see fox hunting as becoming more of a family recreation because of the camping facilities at many fox pens which encourage weekend stays by family large groups. Hunting associations often run special emphasis on children's involvement through youth hunt shows and scheduling hunts and field tri- als to coincide with school holidays. The emphasis that hunters place on fellow- ship and the broadening spectrum of those who participate in events at fox pens suggest that the fox hunting com- munity has supplanted some of the func- tions of the rural community for many fox hunters. The hunts in the pens maintain a network of relationships among fox hunters that are in the past focused more on hunting or and doubt Laura Matthews correctly summed up, "... that old kind of hunting like we had back then, that's just like yesterday, that's gone, it ain't coming back. More than anything else, his relationships with other hunters kept Matthews and others like him involved in fox hunting and ultimately led them through the adaptations to the pen." Perhaps the sense of fellowship is the only part of fox hunting to pass through the last fifty years unravished. Fred Pevey and his contemporaries would under- stand little of deer troubles and "no trespassing" signs and they might have bailed at casting their hounds inside a pen, as many who witnessed the trans- action surely did. But without a doubt they would recognize the camaraderie that accompanied the houndsmen into the pen.

EN!NOTES

1. Xenophon. Scipia Minoa, translated by E. C. Marchant, London, William Heinemann, New York, G.T. Putnam's Sons (MCMXV), 367, although Marchant suspects that the introduction to Cyngerton (On Hasting) is a much later addition to the body of the work, Xenophon would probably have been pleased at the sentiment conveyed by the first lines, xii, xiii.


3. Laura Matthews, MS-WP-001, 3 (quote), 25. David Hellums, MS-WP- 002, 4 (quote), 13, 30.


8. Leon Canoy, MS-WP-003, "In a pen...", 16, 17.

9. David Hellums, MS-WP-002, 21, 22. Stuart Marks, 92-125, Marks investigated some of the competitiveness among hunters and how they felt about their fox hunting although his work involved those who field trained and hunted on the out- side. Mary Hafford, Chasingworld: Foxhunting and Storytelling in New Jersey's Pine Barrens (Tulane University Press, 2002). Hafford also deals with the ways fox hunters perceive their sport but she too studied hunters who continued to run their hounds on the outside.

10. Billy Pevey, MS-WP-005, 4, 5, 16.

11. David Hellums, MS-WP-002, 20, 21, 26, 37, 38. Laura Matthews, MS- WP-001, 6, 5.
In 1995, Living Blues celebrates its 25th anniversary as America's most respected blues magazine. We've chosen to commemorate this milestone by looking forward rather than back. Our special 25th anniversary issue travels from Holly Springs, Mississippi, to South Central L.A., searching out the future of the blues.

We invite you to ride shotgun.

Herbert Halpert of the Library of Congress conducted a folk-songs tour of Mississippi in 1939, recording all types of folk music throughout the State. These recordings are preserved in The Archive of Folk Culture of the Library of Congress. In 1990, with a reproduction on tape of the children's gamesongs, I extracted and studied gamesongs reflecting the antics of the Peep Rabbit from the collection (Ferrius, 1993). In that study, I was led to assume that the rabbit songs must be unique to African-American children, because the Halpert collection and other collections contained no rabbit songs collected from white informants. Furthermore, a review of the literature of children's gamesongs led me to believe that the rabbit songs of Mississippi African-Americans were unique to them.

The rabbit songs of Mississippi African-Americans collected in 1939 present a number of interesting and unique characteristics. The rabbit gamesongs in the Halpert collection characterize the rabbit as pilfering from the garden and escaping over the hill, but not as a trickster, as represented in rabbit tales reported by Joel Chandler Harris. The songs accompanied games or dances which required jumping, hopping, chasing and other movements by the singers, creating active play for children, typically reported at 8 to 12 years of age when they learned the song. The rabbit songs also may be interpreted as vital indicators of aspirations and thoughts of the singers or commentaries on life. In addition, they reflected the children's awareness of the cotton culture of the day. For example, "And if I live to see next fall, I ain't gonna pick no cotton a-tall." Finally, versus about the rabbit in the 139 Mississippi African-American rabbit songs are adaptations from other songs such as "possum songs." The adaptations show that children borrow rhyme and meter of a song employing a cognitive content that may be illogical or impossible in reality. In short, the rhyme and meter are compelling to the children, regardless of the illogicality of the content of the songs.

These considerations led to questions which I attempted to answer in constructing this article. Do the rabbit gamesongs of the Mississippi children of 1939 continue to prevail in the culture of the 12-year-olds, or have they been lost? Are the rabbit gamesongs unique to African-American Mississippi children, as I assumed them to be in the 1939 collection? How do the rabbit gamesongs...
stand in popularity in relation to other Mississippi folk gamesongs or in relation to songs transmitted on television. With these considerations in mind, I prepared a questionnaire for administration in the sixth grade classroom at the locations where the original recording of the rabbit songs had been made. The questionnaire included the titles of seven rabbit songs of the Halpert collection. For comparison, nine other Mississippi children’s gamesongs from the 1939 Halpert collection were also included, as well as five additional titles of songs from the Sesame Street television program. I placed the titles in the questionnaire systematically, with a title from Sesame Street being followed by a rabbit song title, followed by the title of one of the other folk songs, etc. I thought the alternating pattern would help sustain each child’s interest, if none or few of the folk songs were recognized. The response categories for each title were: (1) I don’t know the song; (2) I have heard it but can’t sing it; and (3) I can sing it. If the student indicated (2) or (3), the song was considered “recognized.”

While questionnaires are used infrequently in folklore and folk songs research, they are not unknown (see Appendix Note). Questionnaires have been used to survey populations in order to learn the frequency of practice of an activity, and to determine preferences, especially in order to compare gender preferences (Sutton-Smith and Rosenberg, 1961). In the present study, I am interested not in preference among activities, nor frequency of participating, but rather in employing the questionnaire to establish the probability that a child in grade 6 at selected locations in Mississippi recognized the rabbit songs or could sing them. I am also interested in comparing the rates of recognition between African-American and African-American children. My review of the literature found no previous study that employed this approach to establish the prevalence of children’s gamesongs in a defined population, although an extensive literature is available on the issue of folklore that one is familiar to claim that something never has been done (for example, see bibliographies of children: Grider, 1980 and Halpert, 1982).

To begin the study, I obtained a list of Mississippi school districts and the superintendents of the State Superintendent of Education. Since the 1939 gamesongs recordings were made at Greenville, Vicksburg, Tupelo, Amory, Brandon, and Byhalia, I forwarded a letter to the appropriate district superintendents explaining the study and requesting cooperation in administering the questionnaire to their sixth grade students. After six weeks and no response, I called each district superintendent’s office and then requested the name of the music teacher or teachers of the sixth grade. In a telephone conversation with each teacher (in one case, an assistant superintendent), I explained the purpose of the study and obtained consent and cooperation. The teachers readily agreed to cooperate, but one district superintendent denied permission to administer the questionnaire. Subsequently, a supply of questionnaires was mailed to the music teachers with a return, stamped envelope. Five schools at four of the locations provided questionnaire responses. The teachers returned the questionnaires with white and African-American respondents identified: children were not requested to supply this identification. The teacher at one school agreed to cooperate but did not return the questionnaires. The teacher at another school could not be contacted and the effort was abandoned. While there is no restriction on identifying the responses with the school, in the interest of maintaining anonymity, schools in this report are identified by letter. A total of 263 white and 99 African-American sixth graders responded to the questionnaire. In answering the major question of the study, “Do Mississippi children still know the rabbit songs?” I found that about one in seven sixth grade students from the five sample schools recognized each rabbit song (the probability was .138). By comparison, slightly less than one in four of the students questioned recognized each of the other folk gamesongs (the probability was .277), while the chance that a student recognized a TV song was about four in ten. In addition, the rabbit gamesongs were recognized by white children only slightly less than by African-American children. The latter children recognized the other gamesongs titles in about the same probability as the white children (there being no statistical differences between recognition rates). No rabbit song stands out, each being recognized within a fairly narrow range (0.07 to .38). Among the other folk gamesongs, however, two stood out prominently: “We’re Going ‘Round the Mountain” and “Little Sally Walker.” The recognition rates for the “other folk songs” were higher than the rabbit songs, ranging from .088 to .641. The

| Table 1: Probability that Sixth Grade Children at Five Mississippi Locations Recognize TV Songs, Rabbit Gamesongs, and Other Folk Gamesongs, for White and African-American Children, 1990. |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| **Television** | **White** | **African-American** | **Total** |
| 1. The Alphabet Song | .912 | .859 | .898 |
| 4. The People in Your Neighborhood | .389 | .374 | .392 |
| 21. Everyone Likes Ice Cream | .376 | .323 | .362 |

*Television Songs, average (weighted) probability | .417 | .388 | .408 |

| **Folk Game Songs About the Rabbit** | **White** | **African-American** | **Total** |
| 2. Here, Rang, Here | .053 | .101 | .066 |
| 6. Rabbit, Rabbit | .137 | .141 | .138 |
| 8. Oh John, the Rabbit | .144 | .159 | .146 |
| 11. Ole Uncle Rabbit (Got a Mighty Habit) | .179 | .182 | .180 |
| 15. Lucy Rabbit (In My Garden) | .110 | .111 | .110 |
| 18. Mary Rabbit (What Make Yo’ Ears So Thim?) | .110 | .141 | .119 |
| 20. Jump Vo’ Rabbit (in the Pea-o Vine) | .129 | .162 | .138 |

*Rabbit Gamesongs, average (weighted) probability | .124 | .167 | .138 |

| **Other Folk Gamesongs** | **White** | **African-American** | **Total** |
| 3. Little Sally Walker Sittin’ in the Saucer | .483 | .657 | .530 |
| 5. Call Him Rachael, Call Him | .095 | .071 | .088 |
| 7. Miss Sue, Miss Sue | .281 | .303 | .297 |
| 10. I’m Wandering O’er the River | .175 | .131 | .163 |
| 12. Call That Possum | .099 | .121 | .105 |
| 13. We’re Goin’ Round the Mountain | .654 | .606 | .641 |
| 16. Green Gravel, Green Gravel | .110 | .091 | .105 |
| 17. The Bear That Went Over the Mountain | .285 | .273 | .282 |
| 19. Walkin’ On the Green Grass | .164 | .212 | .177 |

*Other Folk Gamesongs, average (weighted) probability | .268 | .295 | .277 |
TV songs, on the other hand, were the most popular, ranging from .135 to .198. Almost all children were familiar with "The Alphabet Song".

It is quite evident from these data that traditional folksongs persist among the sixth graders, and that the rabbit gamesongs now are not uniquely African-American, irrespective of the 1939 situation, but it is also evident that the TV, as a medium of transmission, commands the young people's attention.

The recognition probabilities by research site for white and African-American children are shown in Table 2. An analysis of the frequencies upon which these probabilities were computed shows a significant difference between white and African-American expected values (Chi Square = 47.78, df = 14, P = 0.0001), where it is excluded (where no African-American children were enrolled). Thus, the differences in recognition of white and African-American students by site are substantial. Disaggregation of the Chi Square value shows that 70% of it can be attributed to recognition of the rabbit songs. In addition, one site, C, accounted for 22% of the value of the Chi Square. However, when the t-test is applied to differences between white and African-American children by type of song, and site, no significant differences appear.

The data show that both white and African-American children are familiar with the rabbit songs, but that the African-American rate of recognition is slightly higher for the rabbit songs and for the other folk songs, than rates for white children. The rate of recognition of the TV songs by the white child is slightly greater than that of the African-American child. However, none of these differences are overwhelming.

The greatest differences in recognition were found at Sample Site C, where the white and African-American children recognized the Sesame Street songs about equally, but the African-Americans recognized the rabbit and other folksongs with greater frequency. This is a rural school with 13 percent African-American children in the sixth grade class of 111.

When the response, "I can sing it", is considered, African-American children show higher rates than white fellow-stu-

### Table 2: Probability of Song Title Recognition by a Sixth Grade Pupil, by Five Sample Sites for Three Types of Songs, Mississippi, 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Sample</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>African-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit</td>
<td>.124</td>
<td>.167</td>
<td>.138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>.268</td>
<td>.295</td>
<td>.277</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>99</td>
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<td>Sample Site A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>.356</td>
<td>.333</td>
<td>.348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>.061</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>.235</td>
<td>.217</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>34</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Site B</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
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<td>.431</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rabbit</td>
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<td>.138</td>
<td>.120</td>
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<td>Sample Site D</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<tr>
<td>TV</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sample Site E</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Employing the frequencies of recognizers, Sample Site C shows a x² with significance P = .006. However, testing p₁ vs. p₂ for each song category in the above, the t-test for Site C is not significant, nor are tests for other sites.

### Type of Song

<table>
<thead>
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<th>White</th>
<th>African-American</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>.228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit</td>
<td>.208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>.094</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*Other Folksongs*)

The Chi Square for the frequencies upon which the above is based is significant, P = 0.031, the greatest contributor being coming form "other folksongs" differences. The number of the 21 songs recognized by individual children varies from zero to 21, with the mean being 3 and the mean being 5.4 songs. The number of songs recognized approximately the Penmanon Type III distribution. African-American children recognized 5.32 songs on average, while the average white child recognized 5.51 songs, a very slight difference. Children at Sample Site C recognized considerably more than the total sample: 6.9 songs per child, reflecting the more rural background of the families. Perhaps the chief significance of this graph is that, in approximating the normal curve, it demonstrates that the questionnaire instrument gives a fair representation of the child's experiences, which one might assume to be normally distributed.

The fifty years since the fifties were recorded witnessed extensive changes in agriculture, industry, education, and in material culture of the countries. The African-American population has declined overall for the State from nearly 50 per cent to about 35 per cent of the total. Density of population increased greatly in two counties where urbanization occurred and will persist in the same in two other counties. The educational level of the population improved vastly. School systems that were racially separate became integrated. African Americans gained civil rights and political influence. The size of the employed population greatly increased in the four locations, owing partly to the increase in female employment. Agricultural employment declined while manufactur-

### Inferences Toward Loss or Change

1. Folk gamesongs normally have no institutional basis. That is, they are not a part of a ceremony; nor are they sacred; nor are they taught to children at school. They do not have organized support nor enforcement to insure their preservation. A study by Lynne G. Zucker shows, by experiment, a strong relationship between degree of institutionalization and cultural persist-

2. As a form of entertainment, gamesongs are highly subject to exchange with other entertainments; one activity or song may be easily substi-

### Notes

- Employment of the frequencies of recognizers, Sample Site C shows a x² with significance P = .006. However, testing p₁ vs. p₂ for each song category in the above, the t-test for Site C is not significant, nor are tests for other sites.

### Figure 1: Stacked bar graph showing songs recognized, No. 167, Sixth Grade, Selected Mississippi Schools, 1990

![Figure 1: Stacked bar graph showing songs recognized, No. 167, Sixth Grade, Selected Mississippi Schools, 1990](image-url)

### Legend

- Students: Recognized songs
- Songs Recognized: Number of students who recognized the songs

- African-American: Percentage of African-American students who recognized the songs

- White: Percentage of White students who recognized the songs

### Conclusion

- The gamesongs express qualities compatible and congruent with the cultural setting. If the culture changes, the gamesongs may lose its functional signifi-

### Discussion

- Inferences Toward Loss or Change

- Inferences Toward Preservation

- Gamesongs involve symbolic

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Steiff family singers, Byrdall, MS, 1939. Photograph by Abbot Ferriss, courtesy of Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Socio-cultural elements. Symbols persist more readily than non-symbolic elements of society. Thus, they have greater power of persistence (Bereolos and Steiner, 1966: 615-616).

Rabbit gamesongs of Mississippi children identified originally in 1939, prevail in the culture of the 12 year old, as shown in their recognition at four locations. Whether the rabbit gamesongs were uniquely African-American songs in 1939 or not, the songs represent a common tradition now. Today the rabbit gamesongs are not as prevalent as other folk songs, and the traditional folk songs are greatly overshadowed by sung learned form television.

While verifying the remarkable tenacity of traditional folk music in the culture of the child, the data also demonstrate the pervasive influence of television. It is transmissions quickly incorporated into the culture of the child, and those interested in the preservation of oral tradition in the form of gamesongs of children should consider using television as a media of transmission. It should be reinforced by simultaneously introducing the gamesong into social groups: the family, the neighborhood play groups, perhaps some aspects of the school program. Education television or videos offer an opportunity for this, especially if the gamesong is recanted in the schoolroom or family setting. Hearing "Here, Rang, Here" on television, singing it together in classroom or family, and making a game of it in the play yard would facilitate its establishment as a recreational pattern.

Acknowledgment

The following music teachers administered the questionnaire to sixth grade Mississippi children: Ms. Joey Folk, Mrs. Joy Carter and Mrs. Evelyn Thompson, Mt. Holls Marsh, City School Superintendent, arranged for the administration at one school. Without their cooperation the study would not have been possible. My thanks.

Typing the manuscript, I am indebted to Maggie Stephens, Cathy David, Lisa Carter and the staff of the Emory University Department of Sociology.

Appendix Note

"questionnaire" is used here to refer to a paper-and-pencil form consisting of "items" (e.g., gamesong titles) to which the respondents or subjects (e.g., sixth grade students) are asked to respond in one of three ways (Miller, 1991: 140-144). This differs from its use in the collection of folklore information in A Handbook of Irish Folklore. For example, "the Barrosee Questionnaire" consists of a list of questions to prompt a collector of folklore as to behaviors, practices, sayings, etc., of interest. Questions are headed for the field investigator fellow (Almqvist, 1974-76; The Irish Folklore Commission, 1961).

Questionnaires that are used in collected folklore collections prompt collectors of folklore and folk songs in identifying the phenomena of interest. Perhaps the most extensive such list, or "questionnaire", were developed in Sweden in 1934 by Prof. Herman Geiger, Dr. Asko Campbell, and Dr. Svante Frejd and adapted by Sean O'Sullivannahain to apply to Irish folklore (O'Sullivannahain, 1970). List of first lines, titles, or key verses are used in fieldwork to prompt respondents, "finding lists" (personal communication from Herbert Halpert, 5/24/93). They may be called "questionnaires to be administered to groups, school children, etc., in order to identify informants, as in the present study. Croswell (1899-90) used a questionnaire in Worcester, Mass., in 1896 in order to identify children's preferences for various amusements, including children's games. According to B. Sutton-Smith (1961: 258-262) Zach McGhee (1900) asked some South Carolina children to identify five games preferring from a list of 12 items. Lewis M. Terman (1926), a psychologist interested in differences in recreational activity preferences of boys and girls, asked children in the San Francisco area to check a list of 100 games and activities indicating those they had played; liked to do, could do well, or liked very well. Rosenberg and Sutton-Smith (1960) administered a checklist to children in 17 towns in the state of other Ohio, like Terman, to distinguish gender differences in preference for games and activities (Sutton-Smith, 1961). They also were interested in changes in preferences over time, comparing survey results from 1896, 1898, 1921 and 1959. None of the preceding were uniquely interested in children's gamesongs. These studies were focused upon the popularity of activities and in preference for them. Other studies using this same approach have been published (Foster, 1930; Lembman and Witry, 1927).
The Catfish Book
By Linda Crawford

In The Catfish Book, Linda Crawford
explores a wealth of history and lore
about an often misunderstood creature that is perhaps the most southern
of fish. Crawford prefices an eclectic
collection of recipes with a concise and
often playful introduction to the place of
catfish in southern culture, the nat-
ural history of the various catfish species,
the intricacies of its pursuit, while in its wild state, and its contem-
porary role in modern aquaculture.

Recognizing the negative image that has often times plagued catfish
and those who pursue them, the author explains how those misguided folks who associate
fishing with catfish in general saw catfishing as the very epit-
ome of wasted time among the lower
class. Most anyone could catch a cat-
fish with a simple and untrained hook and line.
In the minds of some, the rudimentary tackle and idle time char-
acteristic of early catfishing forever
stained it with the descriptive and the lazy.
The general availability of the catfish in the South lent an air of
commonplace to the fish that further
degraded its status. Nevertheless,
for most people in the South, the several
populous species of catfish served as impor-
tant symbols of southern sport and cuisine.

Interestingly, the cat-
fish types so powerful
hearts of the mulititudes of
southerners comprise only a
fraction of the diversity among catfish
species. From the monstrous 600 pound
Eurasian wels to the 800 volt electric
catfish of Africa, Crawford describes
some of the diversity of our native
lctalurus.
The author also
speaks to the dimensions and habits of
such down home varieties as bullhead,
channel cat, white cat, blue cats, and
flathead, species that most southern
anglers encounter sooner or later.

After a deftly-injected variety
of catfish species the reader learns of
the subtle nuances of catfishing or "cut-
ting". The author dispels notions of
ease and relaxation that are so light-
cutting and reveals a desperate sport where
the whiskered prey is pursued by any
technology at hand and sometimes
with no hands alone. Though some may
use only a handline, others employ the lat-
test in graphite fishing rod technology and go to great lengths in the
presentation and presentation of the bait. Nets,
traps, snaglines, pigs, and jugfish
find their uses as do the bare hands of those
bendy spirits who bandyhand catfish from
their beds in submerged logs and holes.

After the hooking, snagging, gogging,
or grabbing, one mush skin that
and Crawford takes the reader through
several methods. There may be a few
more ways of skinning a cat than are
contained in this book, but everyone
should find at least one here that suits
them.

Some may moan the intrusion of
modern technology as Crawford explains that these
times you can get your cat-
fish with a motor, a trailer, and plastic-wrapped
thanks to modern commercial aquaculture.
The author discusses the rise of catfish
farming in the Mississippi river bottomland of
Arkansas and Mississippi from
6,000 acres of ponds in 1976 to over
94,000 acres today. Through America's marketing
campaign, corporate fish mongers of
"The Catfish Institute" educated upscale consumers about the table qual-
tities and dietary values of the once
lowly catfish until sophisticated—and
sometimes Yankee customers now
demands of this once in swank eateries
cross the country.

Although Crawford devotes several
pages to the art and craft of flying catfish,
most of the book's recipes reflect the
influences of The Catfish Institute and its
quest to put catfish on the tables of mod-
mum households. As a result, the "Crawfish Cooking Contest" plans
the range from an enticing casserole and a promising "Pecan Catfish" to a lightly
warming "Crawfish Pattie Mouse" that includes a can of cream of mushroom soup and two
cups of Piere's informal write-
ing style, even when dis-
cussing scientific matters, makes this one of those
dishes that can be easy to
and read volume. Crawford brings us a useful introduc-
tion to the ancient southern obsession with catfishing and that modern advent
of farm-raised catfish.

Wile Prewitt
The University of Mississippi

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The Crawfish Book
By Glen Pire
University of Mississippi Press, 1993.

Glen Pire may have given us the
perfect book on Procambarus clarkii (the
red swamp crawfish of the Mississippi River Valley), along with its many
and world-wide cousins. At times profes-
sional and scientific, while in other
places almost poetic, The Crawfish Book is simulta-
aneously informative and entertaining, well-documented and
mythic, ethnographic and celebratory, sacred and profane. It
presents the "bug" as it is a thoroughly humble and
protestant creature that is also
an overarching and crucially
important cultural symbol in many parts of the
world, and whose primary function in
human society, both physically and
spiritually, is to maneuver. It's more like a fashion, a great deal of the
most common of labor with the briefest
moment of cultural celebration.

In Glen Pire's eyes, the lyrics of The Crawfish Song, the stories of childhoods
spent along a slow moving stream, the pages of recipes, and the listings
crawfish festivals are just as
important in the scholarly and cross-cultural study of
the 28,000 year old relationship between crawfish and humans, the socio-

logical examination of the approxi-
mately 17 documented species around
the world, and the commercial
exploitation that has existed for cen-
turies. Generously illustrated in black and white, with photos, maps, and
graphics from across the broad-
est possible sweep of time and
place, The Crawfish Book is also
researched and documented,
and well written in the
bargain. As
such, it is a wel-
come addition to
all that too-small
shelf of books that
take the most appar-
ently ordinary topics,
use them to open a door
into a little piece of human culture and behavior
fre-
quently hidden in plain sight by
its commonplace nature, and
then show us just how much of ourselves we pour into these
little pieces of culture and how much
they can tell us about ourselves.

Peter R. Aschoff
The University of Mississippi

The Land Where the Blues Began
By Alan Lomax
Pantheon, 1993.

Alan Lomax begins his compelling
and poetic account of Afro-American music, the Mississippi Delta, and his "song hunting"
in the Mississippi back country with the desire to show the
observation that only he would offer. In
an attempt to acknowledge the power of
music blues and also to explore the con-
temporary fascination and meaning of the blues, he writes: "Although this
has been called the age of anxiety, it might
better be termed the age of the blues." Explaining the blues as both a
"State of being as well as a state of
singing," Lomax contends—and rightly, I
believe—that the blues grew from feel-

ly inspected and sorted three times, rinsed and purged, cooked whole, care-
fully arranged in rows covered in mild
sauce, flash frozen, placed in enormous
shipping units and transported to
Sweden for August 8, Kriger-promotion."
In addition to being entertaining,
Glen Pire's The Crawfish Book is also
researched and documented,
and well written in the
bargain. As
such, it is a wel-
come addition to
all that too-small
shelf of books that
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In addition to being entertaining,
ings of “monotony and alienation, of orphing and rootlessness,” brought about view change as well as an economic and social conditions of black life in the Mississippi Delta and throughout the South. These feelings, say Lomax, part and parcel of the African-American life in the Delta, are now familiar features for all who inhabit the modern age.

A hundred years ago, it was blacks in the Deep South who sang “The Levee” as a blues, its melody is almost identical to that of the same song in the Delta, James Cobby’s “The Mississippi River Blues.”

In giving us this “long-delayed account” he offers a story that is part history, part folkloristics, and part a rage to explain. Figuring into the over-all story of the Mississippi Delta is a series of blues, a series of blues that Lomax’s quest to document the expressive performance culture of African-American life. While Lomax is by no means the central character, he has many roles and ample lines in the drama. Because of his clear importance in the documentation of Mississippi Delta music, I find it valuable to see his place within the fieldwork, to understand his story as well as the singer’s story, and to bear in mind the place of the Memphis Tennessee under charges of associating with Blacks on Beale Street in 1942, to his role in bringing Muddy Waters from Chicago to Washington to provide “culturally relevant entertainment for the” at the Poor People’s March on Washington, in 1968.

The book’s title, Land Where the Blues Began, suggests nicely that this is a book about a place—a land—as much as it is than any particular kind of music. And that is a major strength of the work. Lomax offers us a wonderful composite of the Mississippi Delta, using field collected material from the Fisk University Colloquia series, recordings and impressions—most of his field work from the late 1950’s and a wealth of well-chosen secondary sources. While there have been several fine Delta blues books, the late great Tommy Donahue’s Delta Time, Lomax makes an enormous contribution to the cultural history of the Delta through this eloquent window in African-American life in the region.

The story of the Colusa Country survey fieldwork falls most of the first four chapters. Lewis Jones, a Fisk University sociologist, was Lomax’s guide and interpreter, and so on the tour to the delta, Jones, who Lomax terms an ”unflappable bronzed Dane,” provided a bridge between the white field collector and black singers. This collecting trip included Lomax’s visit with Robert Johnson’s mother in Tonica; numerous recordings and accounts of religious and popular and regional music; a wonderful chapter, “The Ulstvo and the Fastest Man”—on tall tale and narrative traditions of Colusa County, and sound ethnographic material on roundabouts and the role of black labor over in Mississippi River; and the influence of the rails on song and blues, to mention a few.

Lomax presents many of his early conversations with black singers, labor- ers, and community members as vivid tableaux, as scenes and parables. His attempts to interpret the scenes and parables are more sharply on blues music, from which the hill culture traditions of Panola County to Muddy Waters, Big Bill Broonzy, and a host of others, again, we are always with Alan Lomax when we are with Lomax. His reminiscence, of course, is not the only one. "The Levee" chapter that involoves the cultural context of the Mississippi Delta makes again within the cultural context of the region, and the influence and oreascular in our narrative of the levee. Lewis Jones suggests again and again that this blues scholars seem to know more about what went on I.D.

Yet this arrange the moments when he would take the large discs from a box and make a recording of someone in their home. It was a sort of “living history” account of the last time the African-American life in the world actually happened. He is seri- ous about “telling stories funny,” based on how to make the story as “real” and “true” as possible, as if it were recorded in the moments.

One of the things Lomax finds to be most obs- cure of all is the black people, he writes, "kept almost incommunicado in the Deep South, had a chance to tell their story in their own way. For me the black discs spinning the Mississippi night, skipping the chip centripetally toward the center” of the record, "it’s a new way of writing human history." As younger blues scholars and others read Land Where the Blues Began, many will contend they can offer modifications to this history or to particular stories or simply adjust factual information, suggesting perhaps that they know more about Alan Lomax. However, the epic that is this book demonstrates clearly that few know as much as part of knowing how to interpret: few have been at the well-spring of black creativity and folk expression and can give us such a view of the African-American culture as Lomax. Alan Lomax takes us on a journey, a trip planned and controlled by his eyes and ears, narrated by his words. At the end, we have not only the blues, but more importantly the fullness and sad- ness and humor and rage of African-American culture in the land where the blues began.

Tom Rankin

*This review appeared in a slightly differ- ent form in Living Blues magazine

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Stories From Home

By Jerry Clovis

Foreword by Walter Morris; interview with Jerry Clovis by Joanne Prichard


To say that Jerry Clovis is a serious comedian may at first sound like an oxymoron, but it is a truth that this man has proven again and again. Willie Morris makes it in his forward when he places Clovis in the tradition of Mark Twain and other great American humorists who have "just been going peo- ple, their hearts as useful as they are nerver." The 50-page "Conversation" between Clovis and Joanne Prichard makes the point as well. Clovis is seri- ous about "telling stories funny," based on how to make the story as "real" and "true" as possible, as if it were recorded in the moments.

One of the things Lomax finds to be most obs- cure of all is the black people, he writes, "kept almost incommunicado in the Deep South, had a chance to tell their story in their own way. For me the black discs spinning the Mississippi night, skipping the chip centripetally toward the center” of the record, "it’s a new way of writing human history." As younger blues scholars and others read Land Where the Blues Began, many will contend they can offer modifications to this history or to particular stories or simply adjust factual information, suggesting perhaps that they know more about Alan Lomax. However, the epic that is this book demonstrates clearly that few know as much as part of knowing how to interpret: few have been at the well-spring of black creativity and folk expression and can give us such a view of the African-American culture as Lomax. Alan Lomax takes us on a journey, a trip planned and controlled by his eyes and ears, narrated by his words. At the end, we have not only the blues, but more importantly the fullness and sad- ness and humor and rage of African-American culture in the land where the blues began.

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Mississippi Folklife is funded in part by the Mississippi Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts.
Mississippi Folklife

Published by the Mississippi Folklore Society and the Center for the Study of Southern Culture

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