

The 6th Annual Louisiana Studies Conference

Conference Keynote Speaker: Barry Ancelet, Professor and Granger & Debaillon Endowed Professor in Francophone Studies and Head, Department of Modern Languages, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Conference Keynote Roundtable: Moderator: Julie Kane, Professor of English, Northwestern State University, Louisiana Poet Laureate, 2011-2013

Participants: Darrell Bourque, Professor Emeritus, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Poet Laureate of Louisiana, 2009-2011

Clayton Delery-Edwards, Director of Academic Services, Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts

Gina Ferrara, Instructor of English, Delgado Community College

Mona Lisa Saloy, Professor of English and Folklore, Dillard University

Conference Co-Chairs: Lisa Abney, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, and Professor of English, Northwestern State University

Jason Church, Materials Conservator, National Center for Preservation Technology and Training

Shane Rasmussen, Director of the Louisiana Folklife Center and Associate Professor of English, Northwestern State University

Conference Programming: Jason Church

Shane Rasmussen

Conference Hosts: Leslie Gruesbeck, Assistant Professor of Art and Gallery Director, Northwestern State University

Greg Handel, Acting Director of the School of Creative and Performing Arts and Associate Professor of Music, Northwestern State University

Selection Committees:

NSU Louisiana High School Essay Contest: Shane Rasmussen, Chair

Jason Church

Sarah McFarland, Director of Graduate Studies and
Associate Professor of English, Northwestern State
University

Conference Presentations: Shane Rasmussen, Chair

Jason Church

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and Associate Professor of Sculpture and Ceramics,
Northwestern State University

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Office of the President at Northwestern State University
Office of the Provost at Northwestern State University

Special thanks to the many other people who graciously donated their time and talents to the
Conference.

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Please note: All events take place in CAPA (Creative and Performing Arts)

Friday, September 19, 2014

- 2:00-2:30 p.m. Conference Registration, CAPA, 2nd Floor
- 2:30-3:00 p.m. Conference Welcome, CAPA 206
- 3:15-4:45 p.m. Presentation Session 1, CAPA
- 5:00-6:00 p.m. Reception and Refreshments (RSVP Required), Orville J. Hanchey Gallery and Alumni Plaza
- 6:00-7:15 p.m. Keynote Roundtable Discussion
Discussion Moderator: Julie Kane
Participants: Darrell Bourque, Clayton Delery-Edwards, Gina Ferrara, and Mona Lisa Saloy
“Louisiana History in Recent Literature”
CAPA, Magale Recital Hall
- 7:15 p.m. Dessert and Coffee Social, Orville J. Hanchey Gallery and Alumni Plaza

Saturday, September 20, 2014

- 7:30-8:30 a.m. Conference Registration and Coffee, CAPA, 2nd Floor
- 8:30-9:45 a.m. Presentation Session 2, CAPA
- 10:00-11:15 a.m. Keynote Address: Barry Ancelet
CAPA, Magale Recital Hall
- 11:30-12:00 p.m. Awards Ceremony: 6th Annual NSU Louisiana High School Essay Contest, CAPA, Magale Recital Hall
- 12:00-1:15 p.m. Light Lunch and Reception (RSVP Required)
- 1:15-2:30 p.m. Presentation Session 3, CAPA
- 2:45-4:00 p.m. Presentation Session 4, CAPA
- 4:00 p.m. Conference Close

“The Natchitoches Art Colony: A Southern *En Plein Air* Art Colony, 1921-1937”

Jodie Cummings, American Public University

“Love the Way You Lie: An Examination of Historical Accuracy in the Tourism Industry of New Orleans”

Panel 1C *Impacting, Interpreting and Living History*

CAPA 207

Session Chair: Lisa A. Kirby, Collin College

Lisa A. Kirby, Collin College

“Truth, Justice, and an American Tragedy: Hurricane Katrina Documentaries and the Construction of Reality”

Hayley Johnson and Deborah Moorhead, Nicholls State University

“Louisiana’s Magnolia Flowers: Black Women as Agents of Change”

Miki Pfeffer, Independent Researcher

“Louisiana Women at the 1884 Cotton Centennial Exposition”

Bernard Gallagher, Louisiana State University of Alexandria

“*Bread is Everything: A Reading of Original Poems*”

5:00-6:00 p.m. Reception and Refreshments (RSVP Required)

Orville J. Hanchey Gallery

6:00-7:15 p.m. Keynote Roundtable Discussion

Magale Recital Hall

Discussion Moderator: Julie Kane

Participants: Darrell Bourque, Clayton Delery-Edwards, Gina Ferrara, and Mona Lisa Saloy

“Louisiana History in Recent Literature”

Abstract: The Friday evening keynote session will consist of presentations plus a roundtable discussion by four literary writers who drew inspiration from Louisiana history for their recently published books. Beginning with the 18th century is Darrell Bourque, whose collection *Megan’s Guitar and Other Poems from Acadie* (2013) bases poems on real historical figures from the Louisiana Acadian diaspora. In addition, Darrell has a new poetry chapbook about the tragic life of Creole musician Amédé Ardoin (1898-1942), the founder of Louisiana Cajun music. Darrell is a former Louisiana Poet Laureate and a Professor Emeritus from the University of Louisiana at

Lafayette. Gina Ferrara's poetry chapbook *Carville: Among Moss and Resurrection Fern* (2014) revolves around the leprosarium that was established in Carville, Louisiana, in the late 19th century—one of only two facilities in the U.S. for the victims of Hansen's Disease, then known as leprosy. Gina is an instructor at Delgado Community College. Moving to the 20th century, Clayton Delery's *The Up Stairs Lounge Arson: Thirty-Two Deaths in a New Orleans Gay Bar, June 24, 1973* (2014) is a meticulously researched work of literary nonfiction about the deadliest fire in New Orleans history. Because of the pervasive homophobia of that era, the response (or lack of response) to the tragedy by community leaders becomes as gripping a story as the fire itself. Clayton is the Director of Academic Services at the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts. Then Mona Lisa Saloy will bring us up to the 21st century with *New Orleans Home* (2014). Many of the poems in that collection chronicle the destruction wrought by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, but also the ways in which cultural traditions and a sense of community helped Saloy's Black Creole family members and neighbors rebuild their lives after the storm. Mona Lisa is a Professor of English and Folklore at Dillard University. NSU Professor and Former Louisiana Poet Laureate Julie Kane will moderate the panel, following up the individual presentations with questions about how Louisiana history and Louisiana literature can intersect. And perhaps we will get to hear a few juicy historical tidbits that did not make it into the books!

7:15 p.m. Dessert and Coffee Social Orville J. Hanchey

Saturday, September 20, 2014

7:30-8:30 a.m. Conference Registration and Coffee CAPA, 2nd Floor

8:30-9:45 a.m. Presentation Session 2

Panel 2A Louisiana Culture: Past Meets Present Magale Recital Hall

Panel Moderator: Felice Coles, University of Mississippi

Lucienne Bond Simon, Free-lance Artist and Art Educator

“Transformation: Building on the Past”

Bryant Smith, Nicholls State University

“Motivation for Studying Foreign Language at the University Level in South Louisiana”

Felice Coles, University of Mississippi

“The Value of Knowing: What Makes an Authentic Isleño”

Deniz Daser, Rutgers University

“Transnational Realities: Honduran Migration to Louisiana and the Banana Trade”

Panel 2B Fiction, Folklore, and History CAPA 206

Session Chair: Derek W. Foster, Upper Iowa University, Alexandria

Robert D. Bennett, Independent Scholar and Author

“Preserving Life in Louisiana through Poetry and Fiction”

Lanetta Dickens, Texas Woman’s University

“Sea Symbolism in Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening*”

Derek W. Foster, Upper Iowa University, Alexandria

“Et je crois à l’aurore / D’un jour calme et serein’: Reality in the Poetry of Alfred Mercier”

Jocelyn Hazelwood Donlon, Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts

“Intersections of Mass Media and Folklore Among LSMSA Students”

Panel 2C *Cajun Culture and Identity*

CAPA 207

Session Chair: Charles E. Richard, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Nathan Rabalais, Tulane University

“*Quoi ça dit?*: The Cajun French of Young Adults in Acadiana”

Emily O’Dell, Louisiana State University

“*Swamp People*: Selling Cajun Values in a ‘Gator Hunting Shell’”

Soliska Cheramie, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

“Today’s Cajun: A Study of the Cultural Identity of Lafourche Parish”

Charles E. Richard, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

“*In the Mind of the Maker*: Notes on Memory, Imagination, and Building a Boat”

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| 10:00-11:15 a.m. | Keynote Address: Barry Ancelet,
Professor and Granger & Debaillon Endowed
Professor in Francophone Studies and Head,
Department of Modern Languages,
University of Louisiana at Lafayette | Magale Recital Hall |
| 11:30-12:00 p.m. | Awards Ceremony:
6th Annual NSU Louisiana High School Essay Contest | Magale Recital Hall |

12:00-1:15 p.m. Lunch Break (on your own)

1:15-2:30 p.m. Presentation Session 3

Panel 3A ***“We Want to Keep Our Culture: Indigenous Language Survival Programs by the Chitimacha, Coushatta, Jena Choctaw, and Tunica-Biloxi”*** ***Magale Recital Hall***

Panel Moderator: Hiram “Pete” Gregory, Northwestern State University

Participants: John Barbry, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe

Clyde Jackson, Jena Band of Choctaw

Bertney Langley, Coushatta Tribe

Linda Langley, Coushatta Tribe

Dana Masters, Jena Band of Choctaw

Elizabeth Mora, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe

Donna Pierite, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe

Kim Walden, Chitimacha Tribe

Panel 3B ***Landscapes and Literature*** ***CAPA 206***

Session Chair: Sarah E. McFarland, Northwestern State University

Sarah E. McFarland, Northwestern State University

“Teaching Place-Based Literature Online”

John P. Doucet and David Middleton, Nicholls State University

“Louisiana North and South: Mediating Landscapes in Poetry, Parts I and II”

Panel 3C ***Interpreting Louisiana Culture*** ***CAPA 207***

Session Chair: Shane Rasmussen, Northwestern State University

Rachel Green, Texas Woman’s University and Harmony Science Academy

“Le Marais Solitaire”

Jon G. Donlon, Consultant/Public Intellectual

“Research Introduction and Reading from: *Bayou Country Bloodsport: The Culture of Cockfighting in Southern Louisiana*”

2:45-4:00 p.m. Presentation Session 4

Panel 4A Disaster, Before and After

Magale Recital Hall

Session Chair: Mary Hallock Morris, University of Southern Indiana

Mary Hallock Morris, University of Southern Indiana

“Strange Bedfellows and Collaborative Strategies: In Search of Sustainable Solutions to Louisiana’s Coastal Wetland Loss”

Edward Brittman, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

“Deliberation and Implementation of the Breaux Act”

Linda Bailey, University of Louisville

“Mitigation Issues in Mississippi River Flooding”

Randall Dupont, University of Mobile

“Sticky Business: The Great Molasses Flood of New Orleans”

Panel 4B Music, Dance, and Song

CAPA 206

Session Chair: Greer Goff Mendy, Tekrema Center for Art and Culture

Greer Goff Mendy, Tekrema Center for Art and Culture

“Black Dance in Louisiana – Guardian of a Culture”

Marie-Laure Boudreau, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

“‘Hé toi!’: The Challenges of Conveying a Message in Contemporary Cajun and Creole Music Lyrics”

Mary Beth Maggio, Loyola University of New Orleans

“The Festival Industry – Louisiana Style: Working Behind the Scenes at Music Festivals in Louisiana”

Panel 4C Health and Poverty

CAPA 207

Session Chair: Dr. Lisa Abney, Northwestern State University

L. LeAnne Arnold, Northwestern State University

“Cajun Faith Healers: *Traiteurs* in South Louisiana”

Denise Bailey, Northwestern State University

“Swamped by Poverty: The Struggles of Louisiana’s Rural Underserved Population”

Dr. Lisa Abney, Northwestern State University

“Harsh Realities: Louisiana Poverty Narratives”

4:00

Conference Close

PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

Dr. Lisa Abney, Northwestern State University

“Harsh Realities: Louisiana Poverty Narratives”

The Linguistic Survey of North Louisiana, begun 1997, contains almost 120 narratives from an array of participants who hail from many social classes and ethnicities. Interviewees are asked a series of questions regarding life in Louisiana. In some cases, the speakers have been asked specifically about stories regarding grave digging and burials or narratives of political figures along with the more generic questions used in the survey. Regardless of the topic at hand, almost all narrators begin to share stories of poverty as they share the stories of their lives. Within these narratives, an array of features and motifs emerge. They employ high levels of description in the narratives—multiple adjectives appear in the passages. Along with the high levels of adjectival descriptions, many indicate location and gesture deixis. Location plays an important role in these narratives and functions as an inclusion marker in most cases, and this kind of narrative often includes a discussion of foodways, healing traditions, and housing types. The features of these narratives and the importance that speakers place upon these stories indicate much about their lives and the socioeconomic realities of the twentieth century and how these individuals overcame these difficulties.

L. LeAnne Arnold, Northwestern State University

“Cajun Faith Healers: *Traiteurs* in South Louisiana”

With their faith healing, Louisiana *traiteurs* preserve folklore in the Cajun community and devote themselves to the lifelong commitment to help others around them. *Traiteurs*, French for

the term *treater*, assist in healing by acting as a spiritual conduit through the actions of touch and prayer and they accept no payments for their services. Although healing processes slightly vary from region to region in Louisiana, *traiteurs* all claim to aid in the same spiritual healing process of physical and mental sicknesses in which the Christian deity God is the ultimate healer and provider of a healthy restoration. When asked during personal interviews, three different regional *traiteurs* claim that their gifts are strictly spiritual and deny any superstition involved, although rituals are performed each time during the healing process. By utilizing passed-down traditional prayers, often spoken in French and sometimes Native American, *traiteurs* strive to provide a form of healing service within the community in which they live. The lore of *traiteurs*, or French Cajun Healers, is important to the communities in which the *traiteurs* serve as many people rely on their services due to economic reasons, as this method is more affordable than pursuing the treatment of a medical doctor.

Denise Bailey, Northwestern State University

“Swamped by Poverty: The Struggles of Louisiana’s Rural Underserved Population”

About 25% of Louisiana’s citizens reside in rural locales (Lane, 2013). Of the 64 parishes in Louisiana, 63% are classified as rural, with no urbanized areas being settled by at least 50,000 inhabitants (Louisiana Rural Health Plan 2011-2015). The individuals who are included in this group differ from the urban dwellers regarding geography, lifestyles, economics, health care, education, and cultural diversity. Another major difference pertains to income and the socioeconomic struggles faced by many of Louisiana’s rural dwellers. In 2009, rural Louisiana’s poverty rate was 21.8% compared to 16.2% in Louisiana’s urban areas (Louisiana Rural Health Plan 2011-2015). Louisiana is ranked 49th in having the lowest overall health status for its citizens (Odell et al., 2013). Several studies have concluded that Louisiana’s rural communities are saddled with health issues related to obesity (Williamson et al., 2009, & Naquin et al., 2007). Research has also shown the correlation of living in rural Louisiana and its negative impact on employment opportunities, childcare, healthcare, pesticide exposure, and STD rates and the disparity in socioeconomic status – especially in Natchitoches Parish. Adding to the dilemma is the significant shortage of mental health professionals in the state, a problem exacerbated by rurality (Hansel et al., 2010). The purpose of the presentation is not only to create an awareness of the uniqueness of rurality, but also to emphasize the social issues faced by Louisiana’s rural population who live in poverty.

Linda Bailey, University of Louisville

“Mitigation Issues in Mississippi River Flooding”

Most of our flood mitigation policies have resulted from major disaster events on the Mississippi River. Most notoriously, it was the 1927 floods in the Lower Mississippi region that put the federal government squarely in the business of protecting people from natural hazards. Although there had been earlier efforts to steer the federal government towards flood mitigation, the element of political feasibility was just not there. Looking at flood loss data from the past 50

years, it is evident that the cost of flooding continues to rise despite federally mandated mitigation initiatives. The 2000 Disaster Mitigation Act, also known as DMA2K, established that all counties must have a mitigation plan in place in order to receive federal funding post disaster. Is this federal mandate effectively influencing good mitigation planning for Mississippi River flooding? In this study, state and local government all hazard mitigation plans were examined to determine what mitigation actions were being taken for flood hazards.

Robert D. Bennett, Independent Scholar and Author

“Preserving Life in Louisiana through Poetry and Fiction”

The presentation will discuss how lifestyles, cultures, history, and facets of everyday life can be preserved for future generations not only through non-fiction books and scholarly works but also through the use of poetry and fiction writing. There will be discussions on specific aspects of Louisiana life that have been preserved through the works of the speaker as well as other writers.

Audience interaction will be encouraged and specific examples of common problems and solutions will be addressed.

Marie-Laure Boudreau, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

“Hé toi!”:

The Challenges of Conveying a Message in Contemporary Cajun and Creole Music Lyrics”

Cajun and Creole traditional music is still very alive in Louisiana today. There are young musicians eager to learn how to play as well as how to sing. When it comes to singing, there is sometimes a supplemental difficulty: the traditional lyrics are in French. Although there are immersion schools where some children are able to learn their ancestor’s language, and others may still have family members to learn from, one cannot ignore the reality that English is the primary language in Louisiana today. Some musicians speak French or manage to learn French, while others try their best to reproduce the sounds of the language by ear.

Traditional Louisiana music is evolving with the creation of new material inside the traditional frame, a combination of innovation and “preservation.” Musicians write new lyrics, and sometimes in English. There are, however, musicians that master the French language well enough to write new lyrics to songs in French. Their lyrics can be about traditional themes: love, broken hearts, drinking, sadness, misery, loneliness, etc. However, they are sometimes about current issues, or trying to convey a specific message to their listeners. These musicians are writing music for dancers, but also hope to reach some of the audience through their words. As we observed earlier, most of that audience is often unable to understand French. What are the strategies used by the musicians to circumvent this fact? Why are these musicians still singing in French? Is Cajun and Creole music becoming more and more a kind of “world music” in its own land?

Edward Brittman, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

“Deliberation and Implementation of the Breaux Act”

This presentation will cover an environmental history project I am currently working on regarding the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA). The project will go into depth to highlight the development processes, involved parties, reception, and aftermath of this monumental piece of legislation. By telling the story of the efforts taken by Senator John Breaux and other key figures in coordination with local, state, and national entities, to name a few, one will gain an understanding of the stakes held by those in favor and those opposed throughout the evolution of the ‘Breaux Act.’ In order to contextualize this local yet vast issue, this study will uncover the early efforts with regards to consciousness of saving an ecosystem in peril, protecting economic infrastructure, and assuring the safety and well-being of local inhabitants. This project uses documents from the John Breaux Family Papers at LSU, the Department of Natural Resources, articles from state and national newspapers, and scientific reports, to name a few. Building upon this local turned national effort, this paper will introduce and analyze the background behind the 1998 ‘Coast: 2050’ plan, an expansion of Breaux’s bill. The future and fate of Louisiana’s coast hung in the balance throughout these deliberations, a study of which will help create new knowledge and understanding of this ever-important reality.

Soliska Cheramie, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

“Today’s Cajun: A Study of the Cultural Identity of Lafourche Parish”

This study is to explore various Cajun identity and French language questions, as well as, how these various ideas and notions are perceived across generational gaps. I have 2 study groups which include the following: Group A, French I students and Group B, French II students. The second subject groups are: the high school students and several people of an older generation of native Cajun French speakers.

For this my thesis study. I distributed a 3 page questionnaire to 148 students French students at South Lafourche High School; these students came from French I and French II levels, as these are the only two levels offered at this high school. I also distributed a 2 page questionnaire, along with a recorded interview of the questions, to the older generation of Cajun French speakers with similar, or the same, questions as the high school group. I analyzed the responses of the high school questionnaire, as one entity. I analyzed the older generation’s interviews as on entity. Thirdly, I compared the results of the two contrasting groups to find any generational similarities or differences. These questions hit on various themes such as, background information (as name, age, origin, etc.), language ability, family questions (in particular language ability), and language and cultural attitudes.

The aim for this study is to catch a glimpse into the state of Cajun cultural identity and Louisiana French in Lafourche Parish, and to hopefully catch insight into how they view the culture that surrounds them. I also hope that this study would spark interest for future research in this area.

Felice Coles, University of Mississippi

“The Value of Knowing: What Makes an Authentic Isleño”

The Isleño dialect of Spanish is spoken by a few hundred residents of south Louisiana in a territory known for its rural beauty, isolation and, after Hurricane Katrina, slow recovery from devastation. The diaspora of Isleños after the hurricane in 2005 has led some members of the community to look for ways of preserving what culture and language remains. The community leaders in St. Bernard Parish emphasize that in order to be authentically Isleño, their members must know:

- family names (kinship)
- place names (space)
- object names (culture) for food, equipment, clothing and household items.

How to get this knowledge? The Isleño community focuses on practicing culture with festivals and workshops, engaging as many generations as possible in the region. At these gatherings, listening to elders who have historical events to recount and personal anecdotes to tell is an important part of highlighting the validity and persistence of the group. Using traditional folksongs as well as conversations, this presentation will point out the information that shows what the true Isleño community knows in Louisiana by giving Isleño nicknames of long-time family members (*Shusho* = ‘Shoe Shine’) naming Louisiana places that have been part of Isleño history (*Reberosión* = ‘Oak River’) and picking out names of food, animals, equipment, household items, etc. (*vapor* = ‘motor boat’) that are special to the ethnic enclave. By knowing these three vocabularies, genuine Isleños both preserve their community and situate themselves in it as authentic members of an important historical group.

Jodie Cummings, American Public University

“Love the Way You Lie: An Examination of Historical Accuracy in the Tourism Industry of New Orleans”

Daily, tourists pour into the French Quarter of New Orleans in search of food, fun, and a few historical facts. The Crescent City is one of the few cities in the US that require a licensing process for tour guides, and officials insist that the process is a valid one to assure guests are escorted around town by only the most informed and qualified guides. However, does this assure that companies are providing the most accurate historical information to visitors?

Among the oldest and most recognizable is “Haunted History,” a company with a flyer at virtually every concierge desk and kiosk in the city. Nevertheless, do their stories of Andrew Jackson and Micaela Pontabla tell more truth or fiction?

Another well-established company in the city, Le Monde Creole, prides itself as presenting the hidden world of the old Creole families. But – are their tales of the old Opera House and memories of the Locoul family plantation facts or fables?

While the city is full of veteran companies, more recent arrivals are making their own mark. Strange True Tours avoids the world of concierges and kiosks, reaching out to visitors via the internet and in the process, gaining impressive reviews online. However, do their stories that lure the curious with tales of Storyville and Lee Harvey Oswald come from the pages of history or the imagination of an entrepreneur more interested in tips than times past?

Finally, Witches Brew Tours, another newcomer on the scene, offers to reveal the secrets of New Orleans to visitors, including vampires, black magic and voodoo hexes. On the other hand, should a tourist trust a tour company that includes a disclaimer that history isn't 'solidly written'?

Deniz Daser, Rutgers University

“Transnational Realities: Honduran Migration to Louisiana and the Banana Trade”

Numerous ethnographic and folkloric accounts of Louisiana have catalogued the vibrant and heterogeneous cultural practices that characterize this state within the U.S. public discourse (Barrios 2010; Ehrenreich 2004; Hurston 1935; Jankowiak and White 1999; Lindahl 2001; Regis 1999, 2001; Sakakeeny 2010). While some historical analysis is taken into account, much of this scholarship is focused on how this heritage distinguishes the cultural landscape of Louisiana from other geographical areas.

Drawing on 17 months of ethnographic fieldwork and archival research, my dissertation examines the experience of Honduran migrants living and working in New Orleans today and the history of transnational exchange that paved the way for their journeys. One of the largest immigrant communities in the city (Donato and Hakimzadeh 2006), Hondurans are embedded within multiple generations of labor migration dating from the banana trade of the early twentieth century to the recent past of post-Katrina reconstruction and new construction.

In this paper, I aim to highlight how the transnational banana trade –headquartered historically in New Orleans and reliant on a pliable Honduran elite and exploitable workforce – is significant to understanding the reality of Louisiana's longstanding embeddedness within the global economy. Both Honduran labor migration and the capital investments by companies such as Standard and United Fruit Companies into the Louisiana economy constitute an intricately networked, transnational relationship worthy of further scrutiny. I argue that rather than a culturally conservative and static region, Louisiana has in fact long been an actor within the broader Gulf region and beyond. To rework Ned Sublette's sentiment of how the world made New Orleans (2008), I aim to examine how New Orleans – within the broader region of Louisiana – helped to make the world through the transregional circuits of labor, capital, and goods.

Clayton Delery-Edwards, Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts

“A Medical Freak with an Eggshell Cranium: The Murder of Fernando Rios”

In September of 1958, during a time when civic officials were openly worried that New Orleans was becoming the nation’s “queer capital” and were engaged in a “drive against the deviates,” three Tulane students went out for a weekend jaunt to “roll a queer.” For a certain segment of college boys in the 1950’s, beating up gay men was considered a fun and socially acceptable way to spend a Saturday night. One of them went to the gay bar, Café Lafitte in Exile, and pretended to be gay. He picked up a man named Fernando Rios, and under the pretense of going to enjoy sexual activity, lured Rios into Pirate’s Alley, where his two friends were hiding. The three Tulane students beat Rios so badly that he died of the effects.

At the trial, the defense rested upon the premise that Rios was a “medical freak,” whose skull was so thin that it amounted to an “eggshell cranium.” Defense attorneys argued that a “normal” man would not have died from such a beating. The white, male, and presumably heterosexual jury members deliberated for only a short time before voting for acquittal. When the verdict was announced, the courtroom erupted into cheers. Clayton Delery-Edwards, who has just published *The Up Stairs Lounge Arson*, is beginning his research on the murder of Fernando Rios, and will be presenting an overview of the case.

Lanetta Dickens, Texas Woman’s University

“Sea Symbolism in Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening*”

The topic I would like to focus on in my paper is the sea symbolism in *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin. I am only studying one primary source because I believe the research will be very broad and extensive. However, I will have at least five secondary sources to support my research. My sources include works by Judith Chelte, Joyce Dyer and Deborah Gentry. My research paper will benefit the academic scholarship. The final project will be an additional chapter to my Master’s Thesis. There is a current publication of a dissertation of the symbols in *The Awakening*, in which the Wendy McHarris studies the sociological aspects of symbolism. My research examines how the Edna’s connection and suicide to the sea is a representation of feminine power. The existing scholarship describes the sea as an empowering voice and an act of rebellion. However, scholars argue that the sea does not give a clear language to Edna’s voice, which makes her powerless. Although Edna committed suicide at the end of the novel of *The Awakening*, her death is a metaphorical symbol of power, freedom and feminine agency. How does the suicide epitomize freedom and power?

Jocelyn Hazelwood Donlon, Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts

“Intersections of Mass Media and Folklore Among LSMSA Students”

Beginning my work at the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts (LSMSA) has brought numerous joys and challenges. As a folklorist, the greatest challenge has been to my pre-existing beliefs about the differences between “folklore” and “popular culture.” The folk practices of students at LSMSA have led me to redefine folklore to include “mass culture,” particularly when discussing the traditions that have developed around computers, phones, and televisions. Whether watching television series, reading and writing fanfiction, playing video games, or using social media, I have witnessed how mass media has redefined how young people establish folk groups and create folklore. In my presentation, I will survey the different folk groups and folk traditions of LSMSA students that center on uses of mass media to demonstrate how popular culture is integral to the creation of folk groups among young people. My research draws from student surveys, interviews, observations, and group discussions with students.

This research departs from traditional studies of folklore and popular culture, particularly film, which is usually interested in the folkloric content of a given narrative. There have been, for example, critiques of how Disney’s version of fairy tales might be displacing traditional versions. This presentation, however, doesn’t concern itself so much with the content of the narrative as with the behaviors of the different folk groups as they consume television programs and utilize social media. If a folk group is two or more people who share folk practices, then certainly the students at LSMSA are creating folk groups through their consumption of mass media.

Jon G. Donlon, Consultant/Public Intellectual

“Research Introduction and Reading from: *Bayou Country Bloodsport: The Culture of Cockfighting in Southern Louisiana*”

Cockfighting is/was a marginalized practice which, while locally important, was often overlooked except when efforts were made toward its suppression. I use a straightforward historic narrative approach to establish a species of context. Then I attempt to deploy the tools often associated with the study of popular culture to examine the central event and its “typical” setting. I’ve placed “typical” in quotes here because, although the mechanics of this sport seem simple, its dynamic nature allows it to be astonishingly responsive – at least apparently – to cultural, economic, and social forces.

John P. Doucet, Nicholls State University

David Middleton, Nicholls State University

“Louisiana North and South: Mediating Landscapes in Poetry, Parts I and II”

How do Louisiana poets present and make use of different Louisiana landscapes to convey ideas and feelings both of local and regional import and also of universal significance? In this context "landscape" may include history, weather, flora and fauna, the human community and ancestry,

and not only the poet's shaping and creating imagination and poetry's sister arts such as painting (symbolic imagery) and music (rhyme and rhythm) but also scientific disciplines such as biology, geology, geography, and ecology, disciplines based on reason and the scientific method. A poem that mediates ideas and feelings through a Louisiana landscape can bring together the powers of many fields of knowledge to make a persuasive statement about the human condition as well as the natural order, history, and culture(s) of the state. As Sir Philip Sidney said in his *A Defence of Poesie* (before 1583), poetry, at its best, can surpass both history and philosophy in its unique ability to mediate thoughts and feelings through symbolic concrete pictures and through stories that both delight and instruct. In this two-part presentation, two Louisiana poets, born and raised in geographically distant and distinct regions of the state, read and discuss their "pictures and stories" and demonstrate how the natural landscapes of Louisiana have informed their writing.

Randall Dupont, University of Mobile

"Sticky Business: The Great Molasses Flood of New Orleans"

While floods tend to stick in the memories of Louisianans, the Great Molasses Flood of New Orleans in 1911 is all but forgotten. In a much publicized effort to support molasses prices, Louisiana's sugar planters organized the Sugar Planters' Storage and Distributing Company. Sugar planters would no longer be forced to dump molasses on the market at low prices before grinding season. Lauded for their business acumen to control the price of the sugar cane by-product, organizers began operating what they billed as the largest molasses storage tanks in the world. Unfortunately, their sweet dreams turned tart when an engineering oversight led to the bursting of a million-gallon tank. In one afternoon, New Orleans became the most "stuck up" city in the world. The rupture created a 15 foot deluge of molasses cascading down the streets of New Orleans nearly suffocating those who fell. The viscid situation resulted in a public relations mess, gummed up drainage systems, and an ecological misère in Lake Pontchartrain. Unable to recover from the catastrophe, the company ground to a halt within two years of the disaster.

Ruth Foote, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

"Greenville—A Conversation"

Fact:

Remnants of Lafayette's Greenville neighborhood remain today despite University Avenue's expansion—a rude but necessary shortcut to Hwy. 90 that ripped open Greenville's existence, yet disguised and neglected it even more. For a brief moment in history, the small African-American neighborhood, known also as Springhill, left shivers in the white community and in its commentary for decades to come. Perhaps, it was the Nat Turner of the 20th century after a police officer's arrival was greeted by death instead of obedience. Details of what happened netted a Pulitzer Prize nominee for a local newspaper writer, but was the rest of the story ever told?

Fact:

Remnants of Greenville also resulted from Mother Nature summoning her residents home, ashes to ashes, as well as from drugs, liquor and murder, and sometimes cancer, quickening the pace.

Fact:

Greenville was a world within a world.

I propose to present a chapter of creative non-fiction—fictional reality juxtaposed with undocumented history. The chapter offers a glimpse into an ethnic world through a conversation I had many, many years ago.

Few have had a chance to enter a world within a world that is not of their own. Few have had a chance to understand such a world's traditions, its mores. I did. And for me, Greenville was an escape—an opportunity to briefly leave my world and its indignities, and enter a Twilight Zone where rules no longer applied, and murderers and other convicts were the norm.

My chapter offers a glimpse into that world, which would be shunned and misunderstood by many, and both considered and rejected as hardcore. But for me, Greenville was a world that was rich in its own flavors and its own destiny, and a world that was respected and cherished by its inhabitants as good citizens do.

Derek W. Foster, Upper Iowa University, Alexandria

“Et je crois à l'aurore / D'un jour calme et serein”: Reality in the Poetry of Alfred Mercier”

Since the publication of a seminal anthology in 2004, literary scholars have reconsidered the contribution of Louisiana's Creole poets of the nineteenth century to American literature as a whole. Historically, the era offered Creole poets a “fit abode,” where they could openly pursue their art and craft. Among the noted poets of the time were Armand Lanusse and *Les Cenelles*. However, writing at the same time was Alfred Mercier (1816-1894), whose career marks a distinct culminating point in the history of Creole literature.

While his contemporaries (i.e., *Les Cenelles*) drew on themes of melancholy and fantasy, Mercier wrote about reality as he experienced it first-hand. Essentially, he wrote nostalgically of plantation life in antebellum Louisiana. Especially in his poetry, Mercier examines the nature of Louisiana and its patriotism, the chivalry and bravery of men, and the beauty and grace of women.

However, Mercier was not known only for his literature. During the Civil War, he retreated to France to seek their help on behalf of the Confederacy. Afterward, he returned to Reconstruction Louisiana, where he feared the Americans would take hold of his beloved New Orleans and force the Creoles to quit speaking French. In fact, while he was not of African heritage, he made a

substantial contribution to the preservation of the Creole language with his *Étude sur la langue créole en Louisiane*. Mercier worked until his death, attempting to gain acceptance of both Creoles and their language.

Bernard Gallagher, Louisiana State University of Alexandria

“*Bread is Everything: A Reading of Original Poems*”

In my small book of poems, *Bread is Everything*, I am exploring the ways in which humans are always isolated and always trying to break free from that isolation and always finding that the distances between themselves and other people or things is infinitely great even though at first glance those distances seem easily traversed and inconsequential.

Jeffrey S. Girard, Northwestern State University

“Early Studies of the Caddo People of Louisiana”

After the 1830s, Caddo culture in Louisiana transformed from being connected with a living indigenous group of people, to a topic of popular nostalgic interest and, eventually, a subject of historical and archaeological inquiry. In this presentation, I examine how Caddo peoples were identified and represented in 19th and early 20th century art and scholarly studies.

Rachel Green, Texas Woman’s University and Harmony Science Academy

“Le Marais Solitaire”

The beauty of legends and folktales lies in their mutable reality. A story may change in the telling as it is handed down, but each version brings some new contribution to a growing history. Perhaps this is why Louisiana’s cultural heritage is so rich; it is rooted in folklore, steeped in tales that have grown in detail and variation. Each time a story—new or revisited—is told, it anchors the past in close proximity to the present and provides generations with a meaningful link.

This is why I propose to honor not only Louisiana’s folklore and history, but also its endearing penchant for ghost stories by revisiting a haunting incident from Mancha Swamp which tells of a Voodoo princess who swore to drag her persecutors to the grave. After her death, her vengeful promise was followed by a hurricane and the destruction of three towns, which cemented the legend. I intend to tell my own version in the form of a short story told from the point of view of one of her victims who was given the added curse of struggling to find ways to continue her streak of retribution into the present day.

A culmination of research into the Manchac area, the original legend, and Louisiana culture in general (plus an already copious amount of experience writing ghost stories) will aid the growth of this project.

Panel Moderator: Hiram “Pete” Gregory, Northwestern State University

Participants: John Barbry, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe

Clyde Jackson, Jena Band of Choctaw

Bertney Langley, Coushatta Tribe

Linda Langley, Coushatta Tribe

Dana Masters, Jena Band of Choctaw

Elizabeth Mora, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe

Donna Pierite, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe

Kim Walden, Chitimacha Tribe

“We Want to Keep Our Culture: Indigenous Language Survival Programs by the Chitimacha, Coushatta, Jena Choctaw, and Tunica-Biloxi”

This will be a 75-minute panel discussion by members of Louisiana’s four federally acknowledged American Indian tribes. All of these tribes have created programs to maintain and/or revive their indigenous languages. Aware of the danger of language loss, trying to re-gain once viable languages the tribes have each created programmatic approaches to coping with language retention. The tribal representatives come together here to share their stories about their linguistic experiences and to showcase the linguistic beauty and diversity of the native languages of Louisiana.

Hayley Johnson, Nicholls State University

Deborah Moorhead, Nicholls State University

“Louisiana’s Magnolia Flowers: Black Women as Agents of Change”

Magnolias are sweet smelling flowers indigenous to the warm humid south. They unveil a bosom of beauty some say unmatched in God’s abundant folds. They are soft to the touch, broad in their reach, and tenaciously anchored in the rich black placenta that gives life to the unborn and blankets those that rest.

The perfume this flower yields is the result of a tenacious sweet unseen by its benefactors, much like the works of many African American matriarchs.

This paper will highlight the roles of Louisiana natives such as Ozenia Secrease who worked with Thurgood Marshall to gain fair pay for Black school teachers; Mrs. Barbara Sharp, mother of the first two black brother judges (Judge Carl V. Sharp, Division G- Section 3, Criminal Court, 4th Judicial District Court; and Judge Alvin R. Sharp, Division I-Section 5, Civil, 4th Judicial Court, serving Ouachita and Morehouse Parishes in Louisiana) and wife to the late James Sharp Sr. the first black attorney in Ouachita Parish; and the late Mrs. Carolyn Moorhead Kennedy, Louisiana Senate recognized vanguard of special education assistance to children and community servant to the needy.

Panel Moderator: Julie Kane, Northwestern State University

Participants: Darrell Bourque, Professor Emeritus, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Poet Laureate of Louisiana 2009-2011

Clayton Delery-Edwards, Director of Academic Services, Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts

Gina Ferrara, Instructor of English, Delgado Community College

Mona Lisa Saloy, Professor of English and Folklore, Dillard University

“Louisiana History in Recent Literature”

The Friday evening keynote session will consist of presentations plus a roundtable discussion by four literary writers who drew inspiration from Louisiana history for their recently published books. Beginning with the 18th century is Darrell Bourque, whose collection *Megan’s Guitar and Other Poems from Acadie* (2013) bases poems on real historical figures from the Louisiana Acadian diaspora. In addition, Darrell has a new poetry chapbook about the tragic life of Creole musician Amédé Ardoin (1898-1942), the founder of Louisiana Cajun music. Darrell is a former Louisiana Poet Laureate and a Professor Emeritus from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Gina Ferrara’s poetry chapbook *Carville: Among Moss and Resurrection Fern* (2014) revolves around the leprosarium that was established in Carville, Louisiana, in the late 19th century—one of only two facilities in the U.S. for the victims of Hansen’s Disease, then known as leprosy. Gina is an instructor at Delgado Community College. Moving to the 20th century, Clayton Delery’s *The Up Stairs Lounge Arson: Thirty-Two Deaths in a New Orleans Gay Bar, June 24, 1973* (2014) is a meticulously researched work of literary nonfiction about the deadliest fire in New Orleans history. Because of the pervasive homophobia of that era, the response (or lack of response) to the tragedy by community leaders becomes as gripping a story as the fire itself. Clayton is the Director of Academic Services at the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts. Then Mona Lisa Saloy will bring us up to the 21st century with *New Orleans Home* (2014). Many of the poems in that collection chronicle the destruction wrought by Hurricane Katrina in

2005, but also the ways in which cultural traditions and a sense of community helped Saloy's Black Creole family members and neighbors rebuild their lives after the storm. Mona Lisa is a Professor of English and Folklore at Dillard University. NSU Professor and Former Louisiana Poet Laureate Julie Kane will moderate the panel, following up the individual presentations with questions about how Louisiana history and Louisiana literature can intersect. And perhaps we will get to hear a few juicy historical tidbits that did not make it into the books!

Lisa A. Kirby, Collin College

**“Truth, Justice, and an American Tragedy:
Hurricane Katrina Documentaries and the Construction of Reality”**

In 2006, Spike Lee released his groundbreaking documentary, *When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts*, a powerful political and emotional statement about Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. Lee's documentary was the first of its kind and, among other factors, presented the raw, urgent emotion felt by many of those impacted by Katrina.

However, Hurricane Katrina is now almost ten years in the past. While Lee's documentary is still moving, he has also updated his project with his more recent 2011 film, *If God Is Willing and da Creek Don't Rise*, where he revisits Katrina and its many complications. Moreover, there have been a number of other documentaries released in recent years, including *Kamp Katrina*, by directors Ashley Sabin and David Redmon (2007), Ed Pincus and Lucia Small's *The Axe in the Attic* (2009), *Trouble the Water*, directed by Tia Lessin and Carl Deal (2009), as well as *The Big Uneasy: Natural Disaster? You Don't Know the Half of It*, by Harry Shearer (2011), to name just a few. When considered collectively, these films construct an interesting narrative of post-Katrina consciousness and demonstrate the way perceptions of Katrina have evolved over the years.

This paper will explore the implications of these films and the narratives they tell of Katrina and its victims, as well as the impact the documentary form has on the construction of reality. Using Bill Nichols's text *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary* as a lens through which to view these films, I will consider the documentary form and its relationship to power, authority, knowledge, and history. While these films certainly work to narrate, educate, and interrogate, what is perhaps most important about them is the way they weave together an interconnected and powerful narrative of race, class, politics, and New Orleans culture.

Sarah Bailey Luster, Independent Scholar

“The Natchitoches Art Colony: A Southern *En Plein Air* Art Colony, 1921-1937”

The Natchitoches Art Colony (1921-1937) was recognized as the first art colony of the South. Founded by Irma Sompayrac (Willard) and taught by Newcomb College (New Orleans, Louisiana) Art professors. Ellsworth Woodward and Will Henry Stevens, the colony was part of the movement to produce southern indigenous art. Originally an *en plein air* landscape school,

recognized locally, regionally and nationally, an arts and crafts local orientation resulted in the latter (Depression) years. The group influenced the development and spread of other southern art colonies and established a public awareness and patronage for arts in the South

Mary Beth Maggio, Loyola University of New Orleans

“The Festival Industry – Louisiana Style: Working Behind the Scenes at Music Festivals in Louisiana”

Louisiana’s unique and diverse and culture make it a highly appealing tourist destination and a major hub for entertainment. Between the modern commercial music festivals and long-cherished local festivals, Louisiana has not only seen the growth of numerous music festivals but has also managed to maintain its unique vibe for those attending. Observing both the difference between commercial and community festivals as well as the experience of working in Louisiana versus in other states, this presentation will explore the benefits Louisiana has to offer for music entertainment events in a portrait of Louisiana’s traditions, as well as new trends, in the music and entertainment industry. Observing changing concepts of the word “festival,” the various people who run them, how they are produced, and the impact they have on the community around them will be shown not only through numerical data but also personal accounts from those who have favored working in Louisiana over other states and areas of the United States. From the top of the state to the bottom, Louisiana has diverse ways of celebrating music, arts, and tradition. Whether the festival is music centered or just is flavored with local musicians, each festival is a part of Louisiana’s unique tradition that has begun to thrive even more with the growth of the music industry today.

Sarah E. McFarland, Northwestern State University

“Teaching Place-Based Literature Online”

Can the idea of Place, with all its enticing concreteness, be taught effectively through the amorphous, non-place of the internet? How can educators engage students with the sensuous particularity of Louisiana’s landscape through a computer? Studies show that students who collaborate online are engaged with the group, develop a sense of community, improve their knowledge of subject and content, and intend to modify their learning practices accordingly. This presentation demonstrates best practices for online teaching with specific, place-based pedagogical approaches to teaching Louisiana literature to demonstrate that ecocritical courses can be effectively taught online.

Greer Goff Mendy, Tekrema Center for Art and Culture

“Black Dance in Louisiana – Guardian of a Culture”

Perspectives on Black dance in Louisiana have been influenced by George Cable's second source voyeurism and now interpreted through first person romanticism. Any discussion of Black dance in Louisiana should not be confined to Congo Square, Mardi Gras Indians, and Second-Line. My examination of Louisiana's dance practices reveal a historically significant dance tradition that extends beyond New Orleans, and which has never been written or documented in totality. If Black dance in Louisiana is examined as an element of the African oral tradition; and as part of the creolization process of Black people in the Caribbean under European colonization, it can be understood as the one artistic expression that served as a vehicle for racial, class, geographic cultural identity, and more importantly, resistance to colonial authority. This work is an analysis of the retention and formation of Black dance traditions of Louisiana. The focus of the work is New Orleans, Lafayette/Opelousas and Franklin Parishes. Today, Black dance in Louisiana continues to hold its aesthetic, folkloric and historical status as a distinct element of Black culture and hence a significant contributor to Louisiana's art and cultural legacies. The challenge is upholding the legitimacy of Black dance genres in the face of cultural appropriation and commercialization.

Francine K. Middleton, Nicholls State University (retired)

“Reality Journalism in Louisiana in the 1920s: How Female Journalists Helped Convict the Three Defendants in the Dreher–LeBoeuf Case”

This paper will demonstrate how Reality coverage in newspapers antedated Reality Television and how Jazz Age Journalism affected public opinion, the trial, and the verdict in the Dreher-LeBoeuf case.

Female journalists were still rare in the 1920s; however, Gwen Bristow and Margaret Dalrymple wrote for New Orleans newspapers and covered the murder trial of the three defendants: Ada LeBoeuf, the victim's wife; Dr. Thomas Dreher, her alleged lover; and James Beadle, Dreher's handyman. Both reporters knew and were influenced by Dorothy Dix, who had once covered murder trials for William Randolph Hearst's *New York Tribune*. It is important to try to understand how Bristow and Dalrymple's coverage of the Dreher-LeBoeuf trial helped speed the trial proceedings and thereby affected the conviction and sentence of the three defendants in the courtroom of thirty-year-old Judge James Simon.

James LeBoeuf was shot on Lake Palourde outside Morgan City on July 1, 1927. Jury selection began July 25, ended July 28, and the all-male jury returned a verdict of capital murder after only ninety minutes of deliberation on August 6. On February 1, 1929, Ada Bonner LeBoeuf and Dr. Thomas Dreher were hanged in the St. Mary Parish Jail in Franklin. This presentation will explore how Bristow and Dalrymple's newspaper coverage, influenced by Dorothy Dix and including the human interest dimensions of the case, was different from and also less sensational than the coverage by male journalists and how that coverage may have played a role in leading to the harsh punishments meted out to Dreher and LeBoeuf and lightened the sentence of James Beadle, who served less than fifteen years in Angola.

Mary Hallock Morris, University of Southern Indiana

**“Strange Bedfellows and Collaborative Strategies:
In Search of Sustainable Solutions to Louisiana’s Coastal Wetland Loss”**

It is a modern day Atlantis. Underneath the lush, exotic beauty of cypress trees and Spanish moss, Louisiana’s coast is disappearing. As noted by the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority of Louisiana (2012), the state has lost over 1,800 square miles of land since the 1930s. To quote Mike Tidwell (2003), Louisiana is “literally washing out to sea, surrendering to the Gulf of Mexico ... taking with it entire Cajun towns and an age-old way of life.” The causes of this problem are quite the Gordian knot: levees built along the river to keep the city from flooding have led to a lack of sediment introduced to the delta; drainage for development behind these levees has led to subsidence; and channels constructed for navigation have introduced killing saltwater into formerly fresh and/or brackish wetlands. This ongoing natural disaster has not gone unnoticed by the policy community: for decades, policy makers, organized interests and bureaucrats have worked to find sustainable solutions to halt the loss of Louisiana’s coastal wetlands. I explore three main research questions: (1) What role did *organized interests* play in the development of coastal wetland restoration plans at the local, state, and national level? (2) Have policy stakeholders attempted to *reframe* the political debate about coastal wetland loss? If so, what *policy images* have been presented to policy makers and the general public? (3) Have policy players attempted to shift political *venues*? That is, did they attempt to deal with the problem of coastal wetland loss at the local, state or national level? Have they attempted to use the “court of public opinion”? I use content analysis tools (i.e., various coastal restoration plans) and empirical observations (i.e., attendance at the Big River Works forums) to develop this qualitative case study.

Emily O’Dell, Louisiana State University

“Swamp People: Selling Cajun Values in a ‘Gator Hunting Shell”

The *History Channel* program *Swamp People* is currently one of the most popular American reality television shows, outranking similar shows on other more predictably popular networks. I argue that the reason for the unprecedented success of *Swamp People* branches less from the practice of alligator hunting and more from the strategic manufacturing and representation of Cajun culture in Louisiana by way of emphasizing tradition, community/family, entrepreneurial spirit, and environmental conservation. I will also address the effect the show has had in terms of general attitudes toward Louisiana culture and traditions for residents and non-residents of the state.

Miki Pfeffer, Independent Researcher

“Louisiana Women at the 1884 Cotton Centennial Exposition”

In their exhibits and through their public and private utterances at the World's Fair in New Orleans in 1884-1885, Louisiana women exposed the contradictory ideologies and realities of their lives. The six-month-long Cotton Centennial was an opportunity to proclaim strengths and accomplishments, but it also divulged shortcomings and sectional biases as Louisianians interacted with strong-minded women from across the country. Cultural consistency was at stake as they considered higher education, jobs outside the home, and human rights, including suffrage, yet they listened and acted. For many, pressing financial and political needs demanded openness to new ideas. The Woman's Department at the Cotton Centennial presented a wide range of possibilities, but locals also had to contend with northerner Julia Ward Howe as head of the department. Despite personality conflicts and a cautious receptivity, many Louisiana women found themselves altered by the event. This presentation explores the circuitous route to what became their somewhat guarded progressivism.

Nathan Rabalais, Tulane University

“*Quoi ça dit?: The Cajun French of Young Adults in Acadiana*”

For several decades, Cajun or Louisiana French has been studied as a language in sharp decline. Linguists have studied almost exclusively the speech of elderly native speakers and the rate of language attrition. However, Louisiana French continues to be spoken among young adults who, to varying degrees, are also familiar with Standard French. The Council for the Development of French in Louisiana's (CODOFIL) implementation of French immersion programs in schools throughout the state and French language instruction at the university level have resulted in increased contact between Louisiana and Standard varieties of French.

The purpose of this pilot study is to examine several features in the speech of adults between 20 and 32 years of age who self-identify as Cajun French speakers and have also taken at least two years of formal instruction in standard French. The survey administered includes a conversation in Cajun French as well as two English to French translations of the same 25 sentences (once into Cajun French and once into Standard French). Preliminary findings suggest the emergence of a relatively small group of common words serving as lexical markers of Louisiana French (i.e. *asteur* over *maintenant*, *vous-autres* over *vous*). In free conversation, some subjects demonstrated changes in accent, notably alternation between [R] and [r] depending on thematic context. Most subjects did not exhibit native speaker mastery of more complex morphological traits such as the clitic forms of the pronoun *elle*. The occurrence of hypercorrection and 'hybrid forms' merits investigation on a larger scale.

Charles E. Richard, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

“*In the Mind of the Maker: Notes on Memory, Imagination, and Building a Boat*”

Some of the oldest, most obstinate questions in Western philosophy revolve around the topic of mental images and their role in memory, imagination, and creativity. Plato described the

mechanism of memory as “an inner artist painting pictures in the soul.” Today’s cognitive neuroscientists argue that Plato wasn’t far off the mark.

Profound insights into these questions can be found in an unlikely place: Louisiana’s Atchafalaya Basin swamp. Edward Couvillier is an 85-year-old master boat builder who still remembers how to construct the traditional watercraft native to this place—elegant boats, more akin to art than carpentry, whose designs are found nowhere else in the world. Old-time Cajun boat builders like Mr. Edward use no blueprints, plans, or even recorded measurements. Instead, he creates a sophisticated three-dimensional image in his mind’s eye of the boat he wants to build—so perfectly proportioned, so precisely detailed, that his hands simply give shape to what’s in his head. Viewed in light of modern neuroscience, Mr. Edward’s creative process offers a unique opportunity to explore age-old philosophical puzzles about how the creative mind remembers and imagines.

I propose to present a short work of creative nonfiction, introducing audiences to my research in this area, which will ultimately be delivered in the form of a feature-length documentary film and a companion book of essays, both entitled *In the Mind of the Maker*. To accompany my presentation, I will screen a two-minute clip from the film.

Lucienne Bond Simon, Free-lance Artist and Art Educator

“Transformation: Building on the Past”

This PowerPoint presentation will feature the ways in which students, educators, artists, and non-profit organizations in Northwest Louisiana are collaborating in studying, then participating in projects designed to revitalize historic urban buildings, spaces, and neighborhoods.

Urban blight is a phenomenon that exists in many of today’s cities, resulting not only in the neglect and decline of historic buildings, spaces, and neighborhoods, but also affecting the well-being of an entire community. This presentation will focus on ways in which area students, educators, artists, businesses, and civic and non-profit organizations in Shreveport, Louisiana, are involved in revitalization efforts in areas such as these by acquiring knowledge of the historic buildings, spaces, and neighborhoods in question, reconceiving and transforming them through the design and implementation a wide variety of arts-based collaborative projects and activities that heighten awareness of and respect for them, and thereby offering opportunities for the enhancement and empowerment of the community.

Bryant Smith, Nicholls State University

“Motivation for Studying Foreign Language at the University Level in South Louisiana”

One of the many choices that students face when enrolling in college is which foreign language to study. National trends indicate that more students enroll in Spanish than language courses that were more prevalent in the past, such as Latin and German. Why has there been such a dramatic

shift in foreign language preference in recent years? Even at a regional university in south Louisiana where many students are of French ancestry and where French is still spoken, students flock to take Spanish over French. In the present study, I sought to better understand university students' motivations for studying foreign language and presented such possible factors as career opportunities, family influence, cultural curiosity, and desire to travel. Results from a survey presented to foreign language students from various language levels indicated that the vast majority of students chose their foreign language for future marketability in the job market and a desire to make more money in a future career. Even in a geographical area with a dominant French cultural legacy, these students cited family influence and a desire to connect with their own culture at the bottom of the list. These results indicate that despite geography, motivation to study a foreign language is linked much more to potential profitability than to family or regional ties to a language or culture. These findings are significant to foreign language educators as they show that attempts to entice students to enroll in courses based on their cultural heritage, personal enrichment goals or potential usefulness in future travel might be for naught. Instead, educators might emphasize future career benefits of learning a foreign language as a method of attracting students to enroll in foreign language courses. For educators in South Louisiana, these findings might be useful in revitalizing French language courses.

Jessica Viator, Louisiana Scholars' College

“Red River Rebellion: Northwest Louisiana during Reconstruction”

The Civil War tore the state of Louisiana apart. Reconstruction, intended to repair the damages of the war and reunite the state with the rest of the Union, accomplished little of what it intended to do. Instead, Louisiana became a battleground. Radical Republicans, comprising of carpetbaggers, who moved to the South to make a fortune and control the region, and scalawags, Southerners who found that supporting the Republican party would benefit them, clashed with wealthy white Democrats, who had long held claims to Louisiana government and were not willing to lose it on account of a lost war. Parishes along the Red River, including Rapides, Grant, Natchitoches, Red River, Bossier, and Caddo, experienced a surge of violence, making national headlines. Bloody clashes, particularly the Colfax Riot and Coushatta Massacre, pitted old Southern aristocracies against new temporary white rulers. Caught between these factions were the freedmen, who ultimately received the brunt of the bloodshed. These conflicts destroyed the idealistic purpose of Reconstruction.

Mary Linn Wernet, Northwestern State University

“Cammie Garrett Henry: Natchitoches Art Colony Supporter, Hostess and the Development of her Plantation ‘Melrose’ as a Writers’ and Artists’ Colony”

Cammie Garrett Henry (1871-1948) married John Hampton Henry of Natchitoches in 1894, moved to Melrose Plantation in Natchitoches Parish in 1899 and where they began a family and agriculture business together. Soon after John Hampton Henry's death in 1918, Cammie turned the cotton farming over to a manager and later to her son Joseph Henry and began reading and

collecting a vast library and scrapbook collection on the culture and history of Louisiana. Shortly after the Natchitoches Art Colony opened, she began to donate supplies, invited participants to Melrose and demonstrated her weaving skills to the students. This presentation will chronicle Cammie's patronage from supporter through the development of her personal Writers' and Artists' Colony at Melrose.