

# Gregory Alan Johnson

## Blues Curator and Professor

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**EDUCATION**

**Master of Library and Information Science** August 2002  
*The University of Southern Mississippi* Hattiesburg, MS

**Bachelor of Music, History and Literature** August 2000  
*The University of Southern Mississippi* Hattiesburg, MS  
*Summa cum laude, Honors College*

**Associate of Arts, Music emphasis** May 1997  
*Meridian Community College* Meridian, MS

**WORK HISTORY**

- Blues Curator and Professor University of Mississippi  
Oxford, MS August 2002 – Present
- Assistant Librarian Forrest County Law Library  
Hattiesburg, MS January 2001 – August 2002
- Shelving Assistant Cook Library of USM  
Hattiesburg, MS May 1998 – December 1998
- Circulation Clerk Meridian-Lauderdale County Public Library  
Meridian, MS May 1996 – August 1997

### CURRENT JOB DESCRIPTION

I am responsible for supervising, organizing, and maintaining the University's multi-format blues collections. I provide traditional and online research services to university students and faculty and to blues scholars from around the world. I regularly create and curate exhibits on topics such as the blues, music and civil rights, prison songs, and more.

In addition to my archival/librarian work, I have taught thirteen sections of LIBA 102, a freshman research writing seminar on the music of social change.

### SERVICE

- Country Music Trail Commissioner, 2019
- Institutional Repository Task Force, 2017 - 2019
- Library Assessment Committee, 2017 - 2018
- Library Data Management & Curation Working Group, 2016-present

- Library Liaisons, 2013-present
- Academic Freedom & Faculty Responsibility (alternate), 2016-2019
- Sustainability of our Digital Projects Committee, 2014-2016
- Library Space Committee, 2013-2015
- Tenure and Promotion Appeals Committee, 2012-2015
- Yocona International Folk Festival, Immediate Past President, 2013; President 2010-2012; board member 2007-2015
- Music of the South Conference chair, 2005-2006; member 2012-present
- *The Blues Today: A Living Blues Symposium* organizational committee and founding member 2002 – present.
- Lecture Series Committee, 2014-2017
- Artist Series Committee, 2006 – 2011
- Cultural Events Committee, 2010-2013
- Library Green Committee, 2014-present
- Library Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Committee, 2009-2011
- Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Advisory Board, 2007 - 2008
- American Music Archive committee, member
- Library Podcasting Taskforce, Fall 2007 - 2008
- Digital Archives Working Group, member, January 2006 to 2008
- Classroom Librarians Committee, member, 2006 – 2008
- Library Emergency Response Committee, 2004
- Faculty Senate, January 2003 to March 2006. I was a member of the Faculty Senate Executive Council, which discussed certain issues brought before the entire Senate in more depth. This group also helped set agenda items for Faculty Senate meetings. I was a member of the Committee on Elections, and was responsible for running elections within the library to elect faculty members to various university committees. I was also chair of the University Services Committee, where I investigated communication problems between physical plant and those living in faculty housing, inadequate crosswalks on campus, monetary issues with campus dining,

and determining the potential membership for a proposed "Visual Art Committee." I was a member of the Academic Support Services Committee, January 2004 – December 2004.

- I have served on and headed many search committees for various positions within the library and around campus.

## PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Music Library Association, member, 2003 – present
- Southeastern Music Library Association, member, 2003 – present; local arrangements committee 2019
- Association of Recorded Sound Collections, member 2004 – present
- Society of Mississippi Archivists, immediate past president, 2008; president, April 2007 – March 2008; vice president April 2006 – April 2007; board member 2004 – 2008
- American Musicological Society, Southeast Chapter, member, 2000 – 2003

## SELECT PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH

### Books

- Johnson, Greg and Edward Komara. *100 Books Every Blues Fan Should Own*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014.

*The book won the Association for Recorded Sound Collections' award for "Best Historical Research in Blues, Gospel, Rhythm & Blues," and it was also the recipient of the Music Library Association's "Vincent H. Duckles Award," the association's "annual prize for the best book-length bibliography or reference work in music."*

- *Encyclopedia of the Blues*. ed. Edward Komara. New York: Routledge (2006).

I served as consulting editor for the *Encyclopedia of the Blues*, for which I also wrote entries for Jerome Arnold, bass, Yannick Bruynoghe, "Billy the Kid" Emerson, Lacy Gibson, Hip Linkchain, "Big" Bill Morganfield, Dave Myers, Andrew "Big Voice" Odom, "Sir Mack" Bonny Rice, Roy Rogers, and The Son of Blues Band.

*This book also won an Association for Recorded Sound Collections Award for "Best Research in Recorded Blues, Rhythm & Blues, or Soul Music (Best History).*

- *Mississippi Encyclopedia*, Ted Ownby and Charles Regan Wilson, eds., Jackson: University Press of Mississippi (2017).

I wrote the following entries: Bo Carter, Jessie Mae Hemphill, Yellow Dog Blues, Sonny Boy "Aleck Miller" Williamson, F. S. Wolcott and His Rabitt[s] Foot Minstrels, Denise LSalle, B. B. King, Johnnie Billington, Lucille Bogan, Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup, International Sweethearts of Rhythm, Leontyne Price, and Trumpet Records.

## Articles

- Johnson, Greg. "Affordable Audio Visual Solutions for Library Displays." *The Primary Source* vol. 36, issue 1, Article 1, 2019. **Peer-reviewed.**
- Johnson, Greg and Jennifer Ford. "Effective Archival Instruction When Embeddedness Won't Work." *The Primary Source* vol. 35, issue 1, 2018.  
<https://aquila.usm.edu/theprimarysource/vol35/iss1/1> **Peer-reviewed.**
- Johnson, Greg, Jennifer Brannock and Ellen Ruffin. "Keep Mississippi Weird: Unusual 'Jewels' in Special Collections." *Mississippi Libraries* vol. 80, no. 1, Spring 2017.
- Johnson, Greg and Jennifer Brannock. "Exploring Civil Rights through Mississippi Collections." *Urban Library Journal*, 22 (2). Summer 2016. **Peer-reviewed.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Greening Our Libraries: Practical Advice for Saving the Planet and Your Budget." *Mississippi Libraries*. Winter 2009/2010.
- Johnson, Greg. "Introducing Undergraduate Students to Archives and Special Collections." *College & Undergraduate Libraries* 13, no. 2 (2006): 91-100. **Peer-reviewed.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Gathering the Blues: Collection Development in the Blues Archive." *Performance!: The Newsletter of the Society of American Archivists' Performing Arts Roundtable* (Fall 2005): 5-7.
- Johnson, Greg. "Cleveland Depot Library – A Mississippi Success Story." *Mississippi Libraries* 69, no. 3 (Fall 2005): 62-64.
- "Politics, Religion, Images and Abortion: Do Internet Filters Block Controversial Sources of Information?" *Mississippi Libraries* 65, no. 4 (2001). With Shugana Campbell, Catherine Holliday, and Thomas Walker.

## Book and Music Reviews

- Johnson, Greg. Review of *Classic African American Songsters from Smithsonian Folkways* CD. *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 47 (2015): 2014-2015.
- Johnson, Greg. Book review of *Let the World Listen Right: The Mississippi Delta Hip-Hop Story*. by Ali Colleen Neff, 2009. *Mississippi Libraries*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (Spring 2012).
- Johnson, Greg. CD review of *Works of Larry Hoffman: Contemporary American Music* (DBK 701) in *Living Blues* Vol. 43, No. 1 (2012).
- Johnson, Greg. "Jelly Rolls, Rumble Seats, and Dead Cats on the Line." A Review of *Barrelhouse Words: A Blues Dialect Dictionary*, 2009 by Stephen Calt. *American Speech*. Vol. 86, No. 1 (2011): 110-112.

- Johnson, Greg. Book review of *Stevie Ray Vaughan: Day by Day, Night After Night: His Early Years, 1954-1982*, 2010 by Craig Hopkins. *ARSC Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (2011): 246-248.
- Johnson, Greg. Review of *Talkin' To Myself: Blues Lyrics, 1921-1942*, by Michael Taft. *Journal of Musicological Research* 25, no. 2 (2006).
- Johnson, Greg. Review of *Bessie*, by Chris Albertson. *ARSC Journal* 35, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 259-260.

### **Poster Sessions**

- “Music in the Library.” Poster Session. Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference. Biloxi, MS. 14 October 2013.
- Williamson, Pamela M., Jonathan L. McMichael, and Gregory A. Johnson. "Beyond the Campus: Community Engagement Strategies." Mississippi Library Association. Jackson, MS. October 2011. Poster session.
- “Using Sheet Music to Understand Racial Stereotypes.” Poster session at the Mississippi Library Association Annual Meeting (October 25, 2006)
- “The Efficacy of We-Blocker Internet Filtering Software.” Poster Session. Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference, October 2002.
- “Composers’ Attitudes toward the Collection of Their Personal Papers and Sketches.” Poster session at the Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference, October 2002.
- “Politics, Religion, Images and Abortion: Do Internet Filters Block Controversial Sources of Information?” With Shugana Campbell, Catherine Holliday, and Thomas Walker. Poster session at the Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference, October 2002.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

I have given over 350 presentations on blues history and culture and library/archival instruction to over 8,000 people in groups ranging from fourth grade students to Elderhostel participants I regularly give presentations to classes from the music, southern studies, the history, and English departments. Some of the professional presentations include:

#### **Out-of-State**

- Johnson, Greg. “Alabama Blues.” Southern Archivists Conference. Montgomery, AL (September 2018). **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg, Ted Ownby, Gregory Reish. “Perspectives on Country Music and Blues Interaction.” International Country Music Conference keynote panel. Belmont University, Nashville, TN (May 2016) **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg and Jennifer Brannock. “Exploring Civil Rights through Mississippi Collections.” LACUNY Institute: Race Matters: Libraries, Race, and Racism. Brooklyn College, NY (May 2016) **Refereed.**

- Johnson, Greg. "Georgia Blues." Presentation to the Southeast Chapter of the Music Library Association Annual Meeting. University of Georgia, Athens, GA (October 2015) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg, Stacy Krim, Holling Smith-Borne. Panel discussion on "Promoting Special Collections" delivered at the Southeast Music Library Association, University of Georgia, Athens, GA (October 2015) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg. "The Kenneth Goldstein Collection at the University of Mississippi" talk delivered at the Philadelphia Folk Festival, Philadelphia, PA (August 2015) **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Bringing Black Music to the Masses: The John Richbourg Collection at the University of Mississippi." Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association Conference. New Orleans, LA (April 2015) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg, Susannah Cleveland, Nicholas Meriwether, Andy Leach, and Gregory Reish. "100 Years from Now: Preserving Pop Music History." Panel Discussion at the SXSW Music Conference. Austin, TX (March 2015) **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg and John Leslie. "Nashville Blues." Southeast Music Library Association Annual Meeting. Nashville, TN (October 2013) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg, Chris Durman, Gary Boye, Grover Baker, Holling and Jaden Smith-Borne. "Country Music: Roots and Branches." A lecture/performance presentation the Southeast Music Library Association Annual Meeting. Nashville, TN (October 2013) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg. "The Kenneth Goldstein Collection at the University of Mississippi." Association for Recorded Sound Collections annual conference. Rochester, NY (May 2012) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Lil' Wayne, Robert Johnson, and a Bunch of Old Manuscripts. Or, How Archivists can Help Teach Popular Culture." Joint conference of the Popular Culture Association / American Culture Association Conference Southwest/Texas Popular Culture Association. San Antonio, TX (April 2011) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg. "A Brief Introduction to the Sheldon Harris Blues Collection." Presented at the Association for Recorded Sound Collections Annual Meeting, Austin, Texas (April 2005) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg. Presentation titled "Digitizing the Blues," presented to the Spring Meeting of the Memphis Area Library Council and Special Libraries Association, Mid-South Chapter. Rhodes College, Barret Library, Memphis, Tennessee (April 2007) **Invited speaker.**

### **In-State**

- Johnson, Greg. "Oxford's Contribution to the Arts." Presentation to the Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience museum. Meridian, MS (July 2019). **Invited speaker.**

- Johnson, Greg. “Mississippi’s Diverse Musical Heritage.” Presentation for the Union County Historical Society Annual Meeting. New Albany, MS (June 2019) **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. “200 Years of Mississippi Music.” Presentation for the opening weekend of the Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience museum. Meridian, MS (April 2018) **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Bourbon, Bootlegging, and Blues" presentation at the inaugural Oxford Bourbon Festival (March 2018). I also moderated a discussion on bootlegging in North Mississippi, with bluesman “Little” Willie Farmer and Grassroots Blues Festival organizer Al White. **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. “200 Years of Mississippi Music.” Mississippi Bicentennial talk sponsored by Special Collections at the University of Southern Mississippi. Hattiesburg, MS (December 2017) **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. “Introduction to the Blues Archive and Music on the Front Porch.” Presentation for 55 attendees to the Conference on the Front Porch. Oxford, MS. (October 2017) **Invited speaker.**
- Ford, Jennifer and Greg Johnson. “Reimagining the One-Shot Archival Instruction Session: Keeping this Essential Instruction Model Relevant.” Society of Mississippi Archivists’ Biennial Conference. Columbus, MS (April 2017) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg. “Blues Food.” Talk given at the Oxford Blues Festival (July 2016) **Invited speaker.**
- Ford, Jennifer and Greg Johnson. “‘Bang Her Well Peter’: Gender Studies in the Kenneth Goldstein Broadside Collection at the University of Mississippi.” Sarah Isom Center for Gender Studies’s SarahFest (September 2015) **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. “The Archives Reach Out: Community Collaborations at the University of Mississippi.” Society of Mississippi Archivists Conference. Long Beach, MS (April 2015) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg. “Archiving North Mississippi Blues.” Blues Symposium. University, MS (April 2015)
- Johnson, Greg and Derrick Harriell. “Talking and Reading Blues.” Opening talk at the Oxford Conference for the Book. Oxford, MS (March 2014) **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. “Music in the Library.” Poster Session. Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference. Biloxi, MS (October 2013) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg with David Evans and Gayle Dean Wardlow. “Blues Scholars Panel.” Oxford Blues Festival. Oxford, MS (July 2013) **Invited speaker.**

- Johnson, Greg. "Delta Blues" 60-second lecture, University of Mississippi Delta Symposium (January 2013)
- Johnson, Greg, Pamela Williamson, Jonathan McMichael. Poster session. "Beyond the Campus: Community Engagement Strategies." Mississippi Library Association. Jackson, MS (October 2011) **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg. "The Origins of the Blues." Oxford Blues Festival. Lafayette County Oxford Public Library (July 2010) **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg and Elaine Owens. "O Donor, Where Art Thou?" talk on locating and developing relationships with potential donors to archives. Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference, Hattiesburg, MS (October 2009). **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Greening Our Libraries" lecture presented at the 2009 Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference (October 2009) Hattiesburg, MS. **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Jelly Roll Clinic" lecture on the intersection of blues and food presented to the Southern Foodways Alliance Symposium on Food and Music. The University of Mississippi (October 2009). **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Collecting the Blues: The Archives at the University of Mississippi" Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference, Natchez, MS (October 2008). **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Mississippi Blues: Homegrown Music, World Impact" presentation for Mississippi and the Arts Week at Hinds Community College (April 2008) **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Introduction to the Blues Archive and Digitizing Audio," Society of Mississippi Archivists Conference, The University of Mississippi (April 2007)
- Johnson, Greg. "Presentation on Digitizing Music for the "Digitizing History: New Approaches for Archival Collections" panel at the Mississippi Historical Society's Annual Meeting (March 2007). **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Using Sheet Music to Understand Racial Stereotypes." Mississippi Library Association Annual Meeting (October 2006). **Refereed.**
- Johnson, Greg. Panel discussion "Mississippi Digital Library: observations from around the state and what it could mean for you" given at the Society of Mississippi Archivists Annual Meeting. Hattiesburg, MS (April 2005). **Invited speaker.**
- Johnson, Greg. "Electric Blues: Revolution or Evolution?" paper presented at the 16th annual Sunflower River Blues and Gospel Festival, Delta Blues Museum, Clarksdale, MS (August 2003)
- Johnson, Greg. Poster session: "Composers' Attitudes toward the Collection of Their Personal Papers and Sketches." Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference, (October 2002). **Refereed.**



- Johnson, Greg. Poster Session: “Politics, Religion, Images and Abortion: Do Internet Filters Block Controversial Sources of Information?” With Shugana Campbell from the University of Southern Mississippi. Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference, (October 2002). **Invited speaker.**

- Johnson, Greg. Poster Session: “The Efficacy of *We-Blocker* Internet Filtering Software.” Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference, (October 2002). **Refereed.**

- Johnson, Greg, Shugana Campbell, Catherine Holliday, and Thomas Walker. “Politics, Religion, Images and Abortion: Do Internet Filters Block Controversial Sources of Information?” Presentation given at the *Information Policy Colloquium 2001: Internet Filters* at the University of Southern Mississippi, (November 2001). **Invited speaker.**

I have also given many presentations and moderated panel discussions at the Blues Symposium and Music of the South Conference, both of which I have helped organize since their inception.

### **COLLEGE HONOR SOCIETIES**

- Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, Meridian Community College, 1996
- Golden Key National Honor Society, University of Southern Mississippi, 1997
- Phi Kappa Lambda Music Honor Society, University of Southern Mississippi, 1998

### **MUSIC ACTIVITIES**

- North Mississippi Symphony Orchestra – double bass, 2012-present
- Lafayette/Oxford/University Orchestra, double bass, 2003-present
- University of Mississippi Faculty Jazz combo, double bass, 2014-present
- Oxford Viols – bass viola da gamba, 2018-present
- Mississippi Early Music Ensemble – bass and alto recorders, harp, trombone, percussion 2003 - 2006
- I regularly perform Celtic, jazz, blues, folk, and Americana on multiple instruments with different bands.
- I regularly play music for the University of Mississippi Department of Theatre Arts and Oxford High School theater productions.