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## Acclaimed Biographer to Discuss ‘Depth and Grit’ of First President

Ron Chernow hopes to offer new insights in UM lecture, also plans to talk with students

MARCH 25, 2013 BY MITCHELL DIGGS

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Ron Chernow. Photo courtesy Nina Subin.

OXFORD, Miss. – A distinguished commentator on American politics, business and finance, Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Ron Chernow plans to offer fresh insights into the life of George Washington in a special presentation next month at the University of Mississippi.

“George Washington: Life and Leadership” is set for 7:30 p.m. April 4 in Nutt Auditorium. The lecture is free and open to the public. The author also will sign copies of his groundbreaking 2010 biography, “Washington: A Life,” at 5:30 p.m. on April 3 at Off Square Books in Oxford.

“‘Washington’ is simply a masterpiece of writing that finally captures the true depth and formidable grit of our first president,” said Bruce Levingston, special adviser on the arts to the chancellor and senior Barksdale fellow of the

university’s Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Even casual readers of history should enjoy Chernow’s discussion of Washington’s life, said Levingston, an acclaimed musician who has known the author for nearly two decades.

“Ron is a tremendously engaging person and a truly marvelous speaker,” he said. “He has an uncanny ability to make his audiences not only understand the history and background of the person he writes and talks about, but also to feel their personality and spirit. He magically makes them come alive for readers.”

An honors graduate of Yale and Cambridge, Chernow has written more than 60 articles for national publications and is a frequent contributor to The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch has hailed him as “one of the pre-eminent biographers of his generation,” and Fortune magazine has dubbed him “America’s best business biographer.”

“Ron Chernow has established himself as a leading biographer of important figures in American business and political history,” said Joe Ward, UM chair and associate professor of history. “His latest book has been hailed as the definitive one-volume biography of Washington, which is no small feat given the countless books and essays already devoted to the subject.”

His works are also relevant and relatable for audiences of all ages, Levingston said.

“While Ron is one of the foremost historians in the country and often writes about great figures of the past, he is also deeply engaged with the issues of our time,” he said. “I think this is part of what makes him such an astute observer of human character, which comes through so powerfully in his writing.”

While in town, Chernow also plans to talk with students in the university’s Honors College.

“Students will have the opportunity to hear from someone of great distinction,” Ward said. “Hopefully they will leave the lecture both better informed about George Washington and also inspired to follow Chernow’s lead and throw themselves enthusiastically into their studies.”

Chernow’s first book, “The House of Morgan,” won the National Book Award as the best nonfiction book of 1990 and is considered a modern classic. More than just a biography, it offers insights that shed “considerable light on the inner workings of modern finance,” Ward said.

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OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates’

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OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy’s new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying “thank you.” “It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve’s

The author's follow-up, "The Warburgs: The Twentieth Century Odyssey of a Remarkable Jewish Family," won the prestigious George S. Eccles Prize for the best business book of 1993. His highly praised biographies of Alexander Hamilton and John D. Rockefeller both were nominated for National Book Critics Circle Awards.

"Titan' is absolutely the best work ever written about the Rockefellers," Levingston said. "And 'Hamilton' reminds you that politics were just as tough as today even back in our country's earliest days."

This is Chernow's first trip to Mississippi, and he plans to visit some of Oxford's historic sites and ride through the countryside to get a feel for the region, Levingston said. It's all part of researching his next project, a comprehensive biography of Civil War general and U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant.

"He's very interested in the history of our state and the role it played in the Civil War," Levingston said. "He's deeply involved in learning about Ulysses S. Grant, so he really wants to understand the South and how what happened here shaped Grant."

For more information on Chernow's lecture, or for assistance related to a disability, call the Department of History at 662-915-7148.

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