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**April 12, 2016**

The Daily Mississippian

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# MISSISSIPPIAN

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI SERVING OLE MISS AND OXFORD SINCE 1911 Visit theDMonline.com @thedm\_news

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## Writers vs. Mississippi religious freedom law



COURTESY: ROYCECARLTON.COM



COURTESY: WILLIAM BOYLE



COURTESY: ANDREW MCNEESE



COURTESY: KATY SIMPSON SMITH



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Sherman Alexie (left) was the Common Reading Experience author for the 2016 freshman class until he canceled his appearance due to the religious freedom bill Gov. Phil Bryant signed last week. William Boyle (top left), Julie Cantrell (top middle), Katy Simpson Smith (top right), John Grisham (bottom left), Curtis Wilkie (bottom middle) and Beth Ann Fennelly are six of the 95 Mississippi authors who signed a statement opposing House Bill 1523.

**CLARA TURNAGE**  
dmeditor@gmail.com

More than 90 writers have publicly stated opposition to the recently-signed religious freedom bill, including Sherman Alexie, this year's Common Reading Experience author for the University. Alexie was scheduled to appear in Oxford in August at the freshman convocation. On Friday, Alexie tweeted, "I'm canceling my appearance at Ole Miss and will

not make any further appearances in Mississippi until the anti-LGBT law is repealed." Gov. Phil Bryant signed the Religious Liberty Accommodations Act into law Tuesday, April 5. The legislation preserves the right of organizations and individuals with religious affiliations to discriminate certain persons if it is in accordance with his or her faith practices. Director of the Department for Writing and Rhetoric Robert Cummings confirmed the cancel-

lation. "I, too, am disheartened by the anti-American bigotry of HB 1523," Cummings said in an email. "Though I understand and share Alexie's frustration at the law, his refusal to speak on our campus unfortunately plays into the hands of the forces of intolerance. I think his time would be well spent speaking to the future leaders of our state, especially our

SEE RELIGIOUS BILL PAGE 3

### THE LATEST

There will be a press conference today at 9:45 a.m. with members of the House of Representatives to introduce a resolution to suspend the regular deadlines of the house. Members of the house who oppose the religious freedom act will seek approval of an opportunity to repeal of House Bill 1523.

## Ole Miss pitcher arrested

**BRIAN SCOTT RIPPEE**  
thedmsports@gmail.com



COURTESY: LAFAYETTE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Ole Miss relief pitcher Andy Pagnozzi was arrested early Friday morning at 12:57 a.m. on suspicion of first offense DUI by the University Police Department.

Pagnozzi, a Fayetteville, Arkansas native, was one of 11 pitchers signed in the Ole Miss 2015 recruiting class. He has been a key contributor to the Ole Miss pitching staff, both as a starter and out of the bullpen. He was released 6 a.m. Friday.

The freshman right-hander has a record of 5-1 with a 3.18 ERA. Pagnozzi pitched 2.1 innings of relief in Ole Miss' 8-7 win over Arkansas on Sunday.

"We are aware of the matter, and from a team standpoint it's being handled internally," Ole Miss Head Coach Mike Bianco said in a statement on Monday. "We understand the seriousness of this situation and address it with fitting consequences when instances like this occur."

Pagnozzi has a court date set for April 26.

## Student website highlights life as a Muslim in Oxford

**DREW JANSEN**  
ajjansen@go.olemiss.edu

UM students launched a website Friday with video showing students and faculty from Taylor, Mississippi, to Jordan and Azerbaijan in departments across campus describing their experiences as Muslims at Ole Miss. OpenMISS, developed by 13 students as a class project, is a website highlighting local Muslim communities. Its goal is to celebrate the diverse Muslim culture in Oxford and promote an inclusive society. Adham Hagag and Katie John-

ston with OpenMISS discuss the organization's current status and its plans for the future. Photo by: Timothy Steenwyk The site's first student-submitted article traces elements of readers' daily lives back to their origins in ancient Muslim civilizations. Project Coordinator Katie Johnston said the team is currently working on in-depth profiles of prominent local Muslims. "What we want to do with this project is really sort of a social media campaign," Johnston said. "So, this way we can engage with students across the board on campus, and, hopefully, it will trickle out into the Oxford community as

well." The Intelligence and Security Studies class is one of roughly 90 teams participating in an international competition sponsored by the Department of State called Peer to Peer: Challenging Extremism. The contest requires student-led teams to formulate strategies and narratives to counter the rhetoric and misconceptions around violent extremism. At the end of the semester, top teams will present their campaigns in Washington, D.C., and receive scholarships up to \$5,000. Each team is granted a \$2,000

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PHOTO BY: TIMOTHY STEENWYK

Adham Hagag and Katie Johnston with OpenMISS discuss the organization's current status and its plans for the future.

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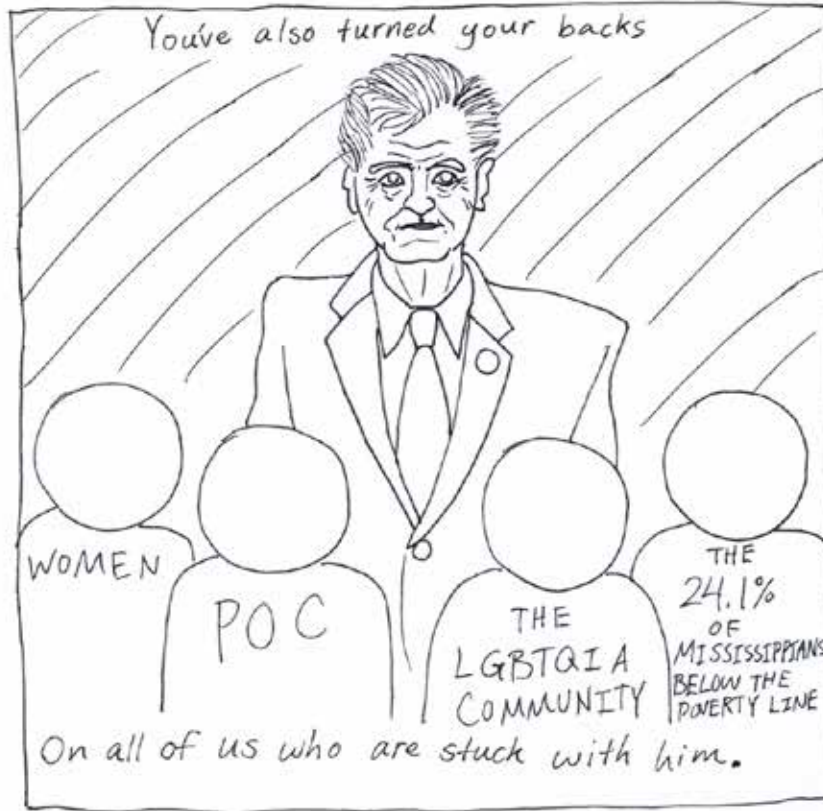
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*I'm not sure any of us ever guessed that a day would come when America would want to secede from Mississippi. Of course, it does seem that in y'all's haste to disassociate yourselves from Phil Bryant's homophobia and racism...*



**COLUMN**

## Being a woman is hard. Why go at it alone?

**CAROLINE ABIDE**  
pcabide@go.olemiss.edu

I've always been on the more introverted side, which you can imagine made my freshman year of college a living nightmare. Friendless, lonely and horribly overwhelmed, I did what any newly-independent young adult would do – I turned to my mother for advice and sympathy.

I recall complaining to her on the phone about how unfair it was that I hadn't instantly found people I clicked with, let alone achieved the holy grail of "finding my bridesmaids." My mother, although understanding of my predicament, was surprisingly pessimistic about the odds

of me finding lifelong friends in college.

"You know, you might never find people you're as close with as your old high school friends. You just tend to have fewer friends as you get older," she said. "I mean look at me – I don't have many friends. I just have your dad."

This was a sobering statement to hear. Would I never make another friend that I could go to for meaningful conversations? Was I fated to have a collection of acquaintances as opposed to a partner in crime? It was a possibility I hadn't even considered. When I stopped and took a look at the women around me, my mother's statement seemed to ring true: the older we get, the fewer close friends we keep.

Perhaps this is due in part to the fact that even today, with more women in the work force than ever, women are more likely to be the primary caregivers in their families; maybe most women don't have time to have a vibrant, fulfilling social life.

Roughly one year later, I can firmly say that I don't believe it has to be that way.

While I admire the fact that mother and father have a strong relationship that is fulfilling enough for both of them, I don't want to grow out of having a female best friend—or several—that I can turn to. My female friends inspire me, challenge me and provide invaluable perspective when I seek their counsel.

When I think about what

I want my life to look like, I know that I always want to be surrounded by smart, capable women who will understand what I'm going through at any given phase of my life. When I become disillusioned with post-graduate life, when I'm celebrating a hard won promotion and when I'm in the throes of menopause, I want to have close friends in my corner.

And you know what? Even if we never achieve Taylor Swift-esque #squadgoals, we'll have phone conversations, laughter and mimosa-fueled brunches, 'til death do us part.

*Caroline Abide is a sophomore English major from Biloxyi.*

**THE DAILY  
MISSISSIPPIAN**

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The Daily Mississippian welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be addressed to The Daily Mississippian, 201 Bishop Hall, P.O. Box 1848, University, MS, 38677-1848, or e-mailed to [dmletters@olemiss.edu](mailto:dmletters@olemiss.edu).

Letters should be typed, double-spaced and no longer than 300 words. Letters may be edited for clarity, space or libel. Third-party letters and those bearing pseudonyms, pen names or "name withheld" will not be published. Publication is limited to one letter per individual per calendar month.

Letters should include phone and email contact information so that editors can verify authenticity. Letters from students should include grade classification and major; letters from faculty and staff should include title and the college, school or department where the person is employed.



**MISSISSIPPI  
press  
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MEMBER NEWSPAPER

## WEBSITE continued from page 1

budget to execute its project over the course of a semester. The OpenMISS team has spent roughly \$600 of that budget so far, primarily on setting up the website and commissioning UM students to generate content for the website.

Johnston said she hopes the program will continue on campus and that its cost efficiency will make it a good model for other campuses.

In February, Johnston reached out to Adham Hagag, UM Muslim Student Association president, for

assistance with the project. Hagag said he was glad to help, viewing the goals of OpenMISS as similar to those of his organization.

Hagag has been at the University for more than five years. He is now pursuing his doctorate in electrical engineering. In his four years of working with UM MSA, Hagag has had experience countering misinformation about Islam.

“Most people think that Muslims are all Arabs or Muslims have the same culture and traditions, and that’s a common mistake,” Hagag said. “We try to raise awareness about the importance of respecting diversity and others on campus.”

Hagag said Oxford’s Muslim

community is diverse because of individuals coming from all over the world to the University, but Muslim students are just like any other students on campus.

“People are all people,” Hagag said. “All people are different in what they believe and how they dress, but they are all people. If you have a Muslim friend, he’ll be just like any other friend.”

Melissa Graves, interim director of the UM Center for Intelligence and Security Studies and the course’s instructor, said the class came together unexpectedly. A former UM CISS colleague told Graves he noticed the University on the list of participants.

“He thought it was the center, and it wasn’t,” Graves said. It was

a marketing class.”

The marketing professor registered for the contest had to cancel, and the center filled that spot.

“The timing was really weird and wonderful,” Graves said.

The center then recruited Bryan McCloskey, senior supervisory resident agent at the FBI satellite office in Oxford, as a contractor to help with the course. Graves said she wanted this course to be built on professional experience.

“He places a lot of the responsibility on the students,” Graves said. “He’s really good at moderating conversations among the students, but it’s not a lecture course. It’s very much ‘Let’s talk about these issues and what are your ideas?’”

Graves said the group’s inclusive approach works to combat misconceptions about intelligence work and what it means to be Muslim in Mississippi.

“Muslims are the people that we work with, they’re the people we go to school with, they’re as Southern as you or I,” Graves said. “It’s just a dimension a lot of people don’t immediately associate with the University of Mississippi or Oxford. I think changing that and opening peoples’ eyes to the fact that these aren’t just people we hear about in the news. These people are our classmates. That’s a really good message.”

## RELIGIOUS BILL continued from page 1

LGBTQ students. Nonetheless, we will continue to work for better future, and teach all students in an atmosphere of inclusion and mutual respect as expressed in our Creed.”

Square Books owner and founder Richard Howorth said Alexie’s cancellation is an example of the harm that can come from this bill.

“We think HB 1523 – regardless of one’s political, legal, or personal views of the matter – will have a chilling effect on businesses in terms of their decision to remain or locate in Mississippi,” Howorth said in an email. “Author events and tourism, which both are important aspects of our own business, also are being put at risk. This is the classic case of Mississippi taking two steps backward, only this time it’s three or four.”

Mississippi author Katy Simpson Smith said, after reading the news about the religious bill, she wanted to make her opposition to it public. After writing a statement Thursday night, she reached out to other writers in Mississippi and found they, too, wanted to speak against the legislation. By Monday, Smith had gathered signatures from 95 authors who either hail from or live in Mississippi.

“It was so important to me, and for all of us, to be able to put

a voice to something that we had been so upset about,” Smith said.

Bills like this one, Smith said, will ultimately be detrimental to the states that uphold them.

“I think we’re seeing this pattern of backlash against the great social leaps we’ve made as a nation because there are people who inexplicably see difference as a threat to their own ways of life,” Smith said. “But these backlashes aren’t sustainable and will only damage the economies and reputations of states like Mississippi and North Carolina.”

These authors and poets join multiple Mississippi businesses that have recently spoken out against the bill, including AT&T, IBM, Nissan, Tyson Foods and in Oxford, the University of Mississippi, Square Books and Volta Taverna.

Jim Dees, one of the authors who signed the statement, said literature and the arts are an important part of Mississippi business and this bill discourages that business. The number of authors who signed the statement is re-

flective of how important this issue is to Mississippi artisans, Dees said.

“I was really excited when (Katy) reached out to writers in particular because I think that’s one of the really positive exports of Mississippi, our literature,” Dees said. “The state has turned to our heritage, our culture, our music and our literature to draw people and then, with this legislation, the people who are drawn to our music and literature particularly are going to be offended.”

Dees said the most apt description of the bill he has seen yet is that of Sid Salter of Mississippi State University, who called the bill a “solution in search of a problem.”

“It’s going to hurt businesses in this state, which it’s already started to do,” Dees said.

Julie Cantrell, a Mississippi

author who also signed the statement, is a Christian novelist and said this bill does not accurately represent her faith.

“As a Christian who values freedom for all, I am weary of people doing hateful things in the name of God. My faith tells me God is love,” Cantrell said in an email. “I understand people interpret the scriptures in different ways, but allowing someone to deny another person’s basic human rights for any reason is not only unethical, it is absolutely the opposite of what I believe to be our ultimate commandment: Love one another. To tie this discriminatory legislation to either religion or freedom is as absurd as it gets.”

William Boyle, a New York-born author who has lived in Mississippi for eight years, said this bill was “a profound disappointment and shame.” Boyle agreed

this bill would be a detriment to business and would make the LGBTQ community feel unwelcome here.

“So many of the people who belong here, who are from here, who contribute to the state in so many ways—as writers, artists, business owners, cooks, servers, filmmakers, musicians, you name it—would feel, I’d say, strong-armed into leaving or, in the least, as if they were not welcome in vast stretches of the state,” Boyle said in an email. “That, to me, would be tragic—both that they’d be made to feel that way, but also that Mississippi would again align itself with injustice and ignorance.”

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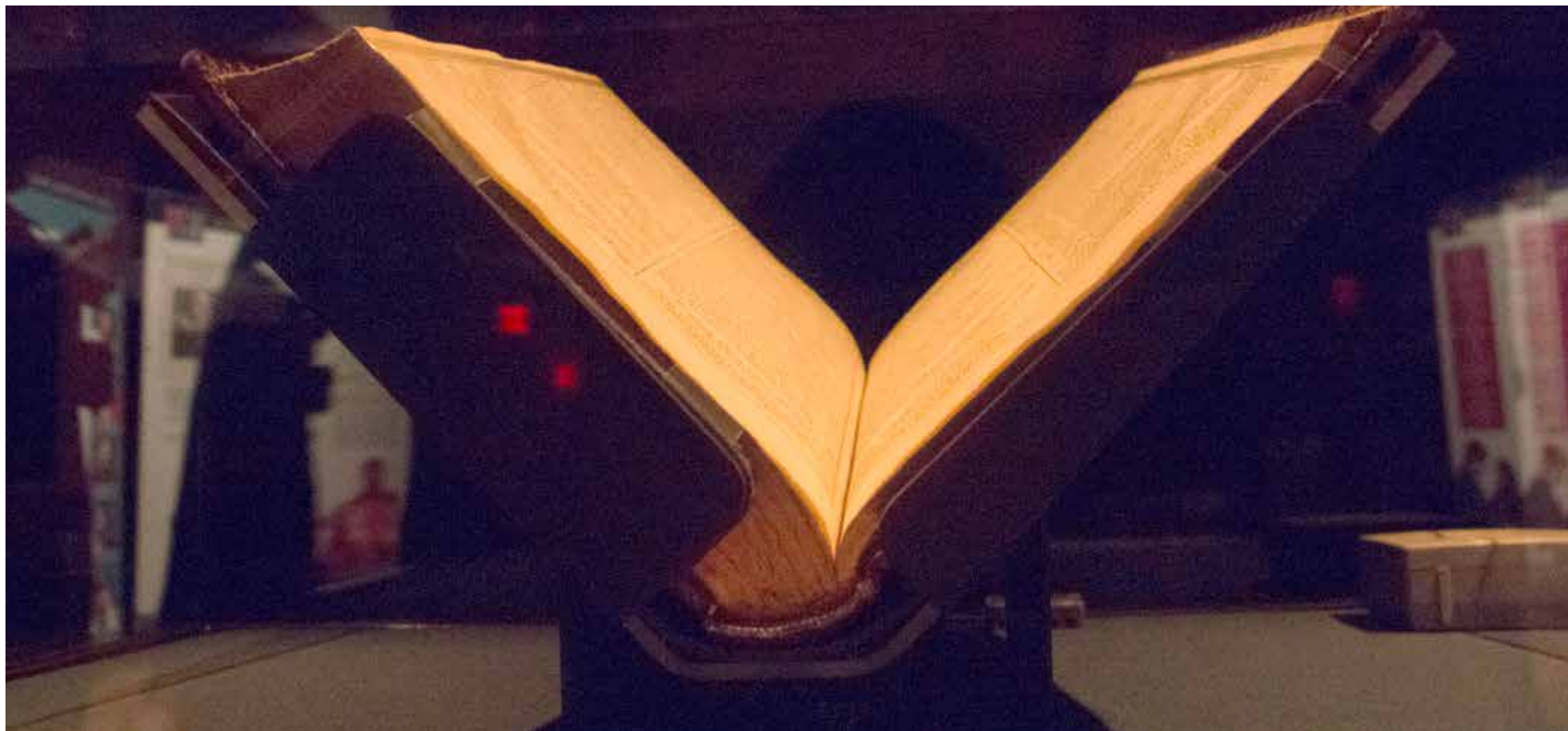
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## Shakespeare's First Folio



PHOTOS BY: ARIEL COBBERT

LYNDY BERRYHILL

thedmnews@gmail.com

Shakespeare fans gathered at the Gertrude C. Ford Center for Performing Arts to see the First and Second Folio in addition to a lecture.

Senior theater major Jerry McCalpin said it was a chance to see history in person.

"It's so weird to see something that's 500 years old," McCalpin said. "It's just so important. It's important to me

because that's a piece of history that is slowly deteriorating."

Ole Miss alumnus Larry Wells earned his doctorate in literature and worked with Ford while she researched Shakespeare for her book.

"She would be happy with this," Wells said. "I know she would be thrilled with this. This is what she had envi-

sioned, to have Shakespeare events (at Ole Miss)."

Interim Chair and Associate Professor of Theater Arts Rene Pulliam said she will visit multiple times while the exhibit is on display.

"I think this is phenomenal," Pulliam said. "(Shakespeare) taught us how to access emotions without losing ourselves to those same emotions."



Alumnus Larry Wells (left) and Interim Chair and Associate Professor of Theater Arts Rene E. Pulliam (right) attended the opening of the Shakespeare's First Folio exhibit at the Gertrude C. Ford Center.



Attendees look at the Shakespeare's First Folio, created nearly 400 years ago.

## Ole Miss professor brings debut novel to Square Books

**AUDREY HALL**  
thedmfeatures@gmail.com

Ole Miss professor Melissa Ginsburg will debut her first novel "Sunset City," tonight at Square Books.

"I'm thrilled to be here in Oxford for the book," Ginsburg said. "I love Square Books. It's the center of the warmest community I've ever been a part of."

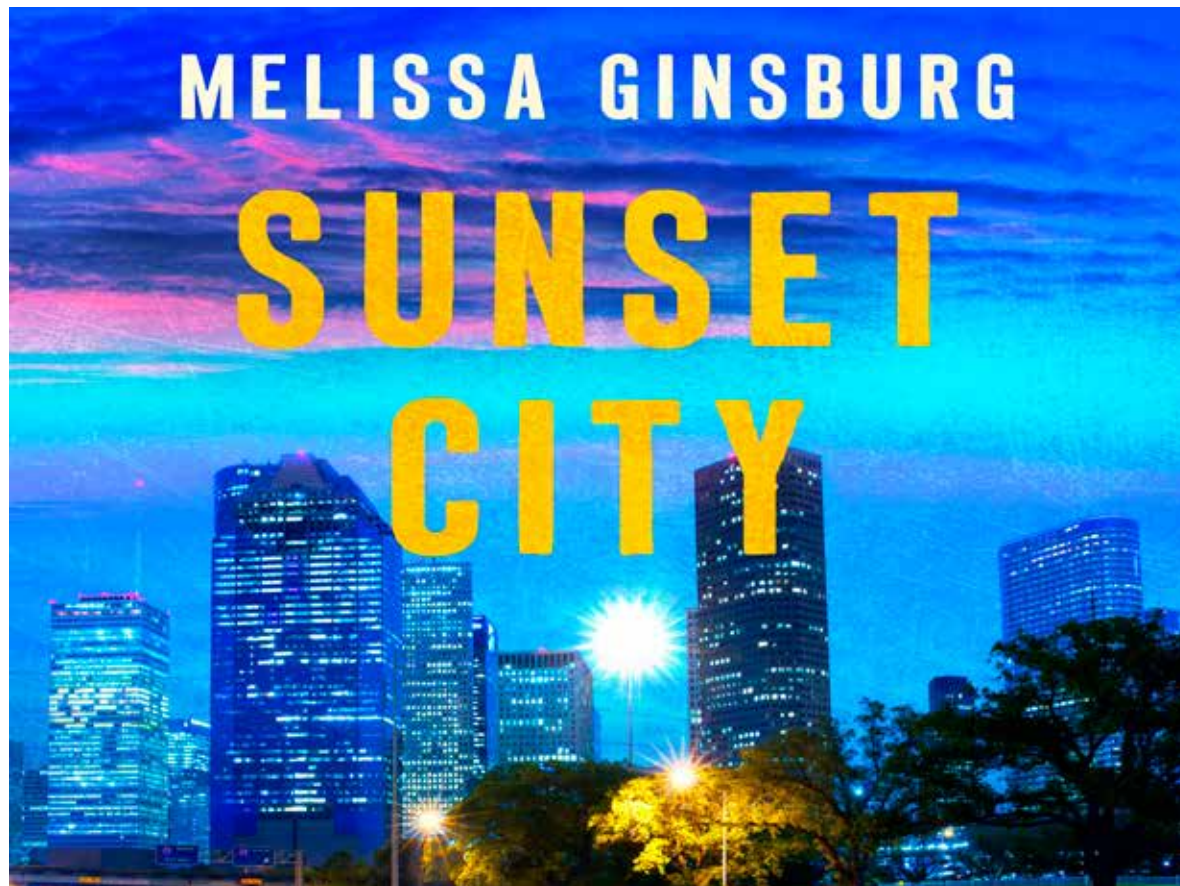
Ginsburg has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University of Houston and a Master of Fine Arts from the Iowa Writer's Workshop. She is currently living in Oxford and teaches creative writing and literature at the University.

As with many Southern writers, place and setting is important to Ginsburg and her story-telling. Oxford is her home now, but "Sunset City" takes place in Houston, Texas, the city where Ginsburg grew up.

"I know Houston better than any other place," she said. "I understand the people there. So it made the writing easier, because I already knew how to describe it. And it's a good setting for this kind of book. Houston can be a very anonymous place. It's easy to hide there, to go unnoticed. It's perfect for crimes."

Ginsburg said sunsets in Houston are stunning, and she uses them as a source of inspiration.

"Houston has beautiful, amazing sunsets," Ginsburg said. "Because it's so flat, there's a wide sky. You can see so much sky there, especially from the top of a freeway overpass. And there's



COURTESY: HARPERCOLLINS.COM

high humidity and bad air pollution. That combination results in stunning sunsets. I always liked that about Houston. I like it as a metaphor, and in reality."

"Sunset City" is Ginsburg's first novel, but not her first published work. Her other previous works, "Arbor," a chapbook, and "Dear Weather Ghost," a collection of poetry, feature poems she has published in magazines like Field, Pleiades, Jubilat, Denver Quarterly and others. "Sunset City," however, is a literary noir, focused around the story of two childhood friends who are reunited shortly before one of them is murdered.

"It's a detective story, but the book is also about friendship and complicated mother-daughter relationships," Ginsburg said. "I tried to write realistically about a group of young people who are on the fringes of soci-

ety. They are smart and creative

and they have difficult lives. It's a very short novel, and it's dark and funny."

When discussing the differences between writing a novel and writing poetry, Ginsburg said her process was completely different.

"A novel requires sustained attention, so many hours each day with no distractions," she said. "I had to stay in the world of the book for months at a time. I can write poems much more quickly, while I'm doing other things. I revise a lot, in poetry and fiction. I worked on the novel for eight years. I wrote hundreds of pages that I threw away. I love cutting and revising."

"Sunset City" will make its Oxford debut at Square Books tonight at 5 p.m.

"It's exciting that the book is out in the world, and that people are reading it," she said. "And I'm looking forward to the summer, when I can focus on writing something new."

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## An important week lies ahead for Ole Miss tennis

**BRADLEY BLAYLOCK**  
thedmsports@gmail.com

The Ole Miss women's tennis team has a big week ahead of them. Coming into this week, the Rebels have a record of 9-9 overall and are 2-7 in conference play.

The Rebels are coming into this week limping, having lost their last four matches, all of which were SEC matches, including a loss against rival Mississippi State.

This is a crucial week for Ole Miss, as it is the last week of regular season before the SEC tournament starts. The Rebels begin the week with a match against Arkansas State. Arkansas State has struggled mightily this year and has not won a match, possessing

a record of 0-17. Most of the matches the Red Wolves have played haven't been competitive. Arkansas State does, however, have a solid singles player in Julie Gauguery. At the end of the day, though, this should be a relatively easy match for the Rebels to pick up a victory to begin this three-match week.

Look for Ole Miss to strike early with a win in doubles and never let up. The Rebels won't have much down time before they take on the Arkansas Razorbacks in Arkansas. Arkansas is currently 16-10 overall and 5-6 in the SEC. The Razorbacks are on a two-match losing streak. Their last two matches have been 4-3 heartbreaking losses to Kentucky and Vanderbilt. Don't be deceived by Arkan-

sas' losing conference record. Arkansas is a good team.

Arkansas has a talented singles player in Yuliya Lysa. Lysa is ranked No. 34 in the nation and has several victories over other ranked opponents. Lysa will face off against Ole Miss' best singles player Arianne Hartono, who is ranked No. 29 in the country. This match alone will be worth the price of admission. Hartono will pull this one out. The doubles point will be critical in this match. Arkansas boasts one of the best doubles lineup in the SEC, led by their No. 1 doubles team of Yuliya Lysa and Shannon Hudson. Ole Miss also has a strong No. 1 doubles team in Arianne Hartono and Mai El Kamash. This will likely be the most crucial point of the match.



PHOTO BY: ARIEL COBBERT

Arianne Hartono prepares to serve in game against Vanderbilt.

Whichever team wins the doubles point will more than likely go on to win the match. After its home matches with the Red Wolves and Razorbacks, Ole Miss will hit the road to play Missouri in Columbia. Missouri is 15-10 overall and 2-9 in SEC play. The Tigers have lost their last three matches, and will look to get a win against Mississippi State earlier in the week before taking on Ole Miss.

Missouri has not fared well in SEC play, and this should be a match the Rebels look to take advantage of as they jostle for position for the SEC tournament.

My prediction: The Rebels will go 2-1 on the week in its three matches and garner some momentum going into the SEC Tournament.

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  - Van Gogh painting
  - Loafed around

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED

C	S	T	S	C	O	F	F	M	A	R				
P	O	L	O	P	A	B	L	O	E	G	A	D		
A	L	A	W	A	D	I	E	U	L	A	C	E		
H	O	M	B	U	R	G	W	R	I	T	T	E	N	
			O	N	S	E	T	B	R	I	E	R	S	
M	U	T	A	T	E	A	S	I	A	N				
A	M	A	T	I	S	L	O	T	G	R	I	M		
N	P	R	L	I	C	E	N	S	E	I	C	H		
S	S	T	S	P	L	A	N	G	G	E	C	K	O	
			P	O	I	N	T	A	R	R	A	I	Y	S
I	N	L	U	C	K	S	C	R	E	E				
C	O	U	R	T	E	D	H	I	T	C	H	E	D	
E	V	E	N	I	O	T	A	S	T	E	N	D		
S	A	G	E	K	N	I	F	E	E	R	G	S		
K	O	D	E	S	S	E	N	D	I	E	R			

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26 Jazz genre  
27 Watchful  
29 Aristocratic address  
30 Buoy up  
31 Snooped around  
34 Crime fighter — Ness  
40 Hassock  
41 Blow hard  
42 Married people  
43 Ground, as teeth  
47 Sooner than anon

49 Natural resource  
50 Champagne glass  
51 Barbecue need  
52 Handel contemporary  
53 Sotto —  
54 Execs  
56 Med. plan  
58 Unseal, to Blake  
59 "In a beautiful" —green boat"  
60 Sushi morsel

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15					16			
17				18					19			
		20	21					22				
	23	24					25					
26						27			28	29	30	31
32				33	34				35			
36						37					38	
39			40	41				42		43		
44				45				46	47			
			48	49				50				
51	52	53				54						
55					56				57	58	59	60
61					62				63			
64					65				66			

**SUDOKU**  
Puzzles by KrazyDad

2			9					
	7			1			5	
		8			3		2	6
			8			2	3	
7	4		3			5		
	5			7			4	
					8			1

**HOW TO PLAY**  
Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 with no repeats.

**DIFFICULTY LEVEL**  
**TOUGH**

1	7	3	8	5	4	2	6	9
6	4	9	1	7	2	3	5	8
2	8	5	6	9	3	1	4	7
8	6	7	6	3	1	5	2	4
4	9	1	7	2	5	6	8	3
5	3	2	4	9	8	7	6	1
6	2	6	3	4	7	8	1	5
3	5	8	2	1	6	4	7	9
4	1	7	8	9	6	3	2	5

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## Saunders breaks record in shot put at Tiger Track Classic



Raven Saunders throws a shot put at an earlier meet this season.

COURTESY: OLEMISSPORTS.COM

Two event victories, a facility record, a school-record and 10 personal bests highlighted the Ole Miss Rebels' weekend at the Tiger Track Classic.

"We had another solid performance by the team this week," Ole Miss Head Coach Connie Price-Smith said.

"We are closing in on the end of the conference season, and this meet gave us a chance to see what we need work on. All in all, I was pleased with the way most performed. I think we just need to keep grinding for the next three weeks and get ready for the outdoor SEC Championships."

Sophomore Raven Saunders once again delivered in the shot put, winning the event with a distance of 18.63m/61-1.50.

That mark was nearly a meter better than the previous facility record that had stood

since 2007. As for Saunders, it's the second-best distance of her career.

Saunders also earned a runner-up finish in the discus with a distance of 51.07m/167-7.

The women's 200m saw Ole Miss place two runners in the top six, with sophomores Shannon Ray (23.80) and Nicole Henderson (24.06) finishing fifth and sixth respectively.

Sophomore Lindsey Murray earned a third-place finish in the pole vault invitational by clearing a height of 4.15m/13-7.25.

Other notable finishes include junior Kevin Conway coming in at sixth in the discus (50.95m/167-2), sophomore Porsha Shirley finishing ninth in the 100 meters with a personal best time of 11.94, senior Racquel Moses earning a seventh-place finish

in the 400m hurdles, and freshman Katy McAuley clearing a personal-best height of 4.00m/13-1.50 to finish runner-up in the pole vault.

Sophomore Dempsey McGuigan breaking his own school record to win the hammer throw with a mark of 69.59m/228-4 highlighted day one of the Tiger Track Classic.

Ole Miss rested several top athletes this weekend. The Rebels return to the track at the Texas Invitational on Saturday, April 16.

For more information on Ole Miss Track & Field, follow the Rebels on Twitter at @OleMissTrack, as well as Facebook and Instagram.

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## Ole Miss football transitions from spring to summer

**CODY THOMASON**  
thedmsports@gmail.com

Spring football is a relatively short period of time for teams to practice, but it provides a great preview of the team and insight into which players could step during the upcoming season. Here are some of the top things to take from the spring:

The wide receiver position will be reloaded. Laquon Treadwell and Cody Core are gone, but Quincy Adeboyejo looks ready to take on a bigger role in the offense, and the return of Damore'ea Stringfellow should help as well. Spring practice also gave the first glimpse into the development of some of the younger receivers. DaMarkus Lodge seems poised to step up and have a big season, making several acrobatic catches in practice and showing off good leaping ability on jump balls. Van Jefferson could also play a big role from the slot position, where his speed could help on catch-and-run short passes as well as deep balls.

The running back position could spread its touches among three or more backs. With

Jaylen Walton gone, the two most experienced backs are senior Akeem Judd, who ran for 421 yards and three touchdowns on 77 carries, and junior Jordan Wilkins, who ran for 379 yards and four touchdowns on 72 carries. Judd entered the 2015 season as the third back, but by the season's end, his carries significantly increased as he provided a power option for the Rebels' rushing attack. Judd will likely get the lion's share of the carries, but Wilkins also runs with power and can be useful in the same way. The dark horse candidate in the running back competition is freshman Eric Swinney, who redshirted due to injury last season. Swinney provides a speedier option, similar to what Walton brought last year, but has a bigger frame than Walton and showed good power in the spring, too.

There will also be a lot of competition at the safety and husky positions. Junior C.J. Hampton will likely be starting at the free safety spot and look to keep improving after seeing an increase in playing time last year. Joining Hampton at free safety could be Armani Linton



FILE PHOTO

Players run drills during a spring practice.

and A.J. Moore. Sophomore Zedrick Woods saw a solid amount of time in the secondary last season and now has a chance to emerge as the No. 1 position at the rover position, but will also see competition from C.J. Moore.

At husky, Tony Conner will be the starter if he returns healthy in time for the season, but there's plenty of competition for the spot behind him, which could see a good amount of time during the season. Montrell Custis, a redshirt

freshman, and true freshmen Myles Hartsfield and Greg Eisworth are fighting for the spot, so there's a good chance for a young player to step up and earn a spot early in his career. Custis looked to have the upper hand in the spring.

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