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LaReeca Rucker

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Professor Co-Hosting Turner Classic Movies Film Showing

School of Journalism and New Media's Joe Atkins set to appear on national program March 21

MARCH 15, 2021 BY LAREECA RUCKER



Journalism professor Joe Atkins will co-host Turner Classic Movie's showing of the 1959 rock 'n' roll film 'Go, Johnny, Go!' at 11 a.m. March 21 on TCM-TV. Photo by Kevin Bain/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

OXFORD, Miss. – When movie buff Joe Atkins, a **University of Mississippi journalism** professor, recently entered a Turner Classic Movies contest, he didn't expect to be selected as a winner. But Atkins will co-host TCM's showing of the 1959 rock 'n' roll film "Go, Johnny, Go!" at 11 a.m. Sunday (March 21) on TCM-TV, the national network based in Atlanta, with regular host Alicia Malone.

Atkins, whose new book "Harry Dean Stanton: Hollywood's Zen Rebel" was published by University Press of Kentucky last November, entered the contest by listing the 10 movies he would like to co-host. Several were movies in which actor Harry Dean Stanton appeared, but the film TCM chose was "Go, Johnny, Go!" starring Alan Freed and Chuck Berry.

Atkins spent four years on his writing journey for the book on Stanton, including several trips to Los Angeles to meet some of Stanton's actor and director friends and colleagues.

A charter member of Turner Classic Movies' "Backlot," an organization of fans and film buffs, Atkins is a lifelong lover of old and new movies.

"As a 'Backlot' member, I had a chance last November to enter a contest to become a co-host," he said. "I had to list 10 movies I'd love to co-host and cite why."

With his book published that same month (November 2020), he listed four or five Stanton movies. No. 10 on his list was "Go, Johnny, Go!," a 1959 rock 'n' roll film starring famed disc jockey Freed, rock 'n' roller Chuck Berry, singer Jimmy Clanton and a host of famous early rock 'n' roll musicians such as Eddie Cochran, Ritchie Valens and Jackie Wilson.

"I had seen the movie in my hometown in North Carolina as a young teenager in the early 1960s," he said. "TCM picked me to co-host, and that's the film TCM picked."

Atkins said they filmed for the broadcast Feb. 9 via Zoom.

"I was in my living room here in Oxford, and Alicia Malone was at TCM headquarters in Atlanta," he said. "The filming went well. I did a lot of preparation, including watching the film several times beforehand. I purchased a DVD of it at a Memphis flea market years ago."

In his discussion with Malone, he talked about the following:

"The film has a really weak plot and schmaltzy moments, but a ton of great music," he said. "It's a window into the early years of rock 'n' roll, just before big things begin to change."

Freed was a rock 'n' roll pioneer, the first disc jockey to play the music to a national audience – first out

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Civil Engineering Professor Receives Most-Cited Paper Award

OXFORD, Miss. – Peer recognition is a rewarding experience for anyone, but University of Mississippi researcher Amir Mehrara Molan was elated when an article he co-authored recently received the Most Cited Paper Award at the 102nd Transportation Research Board meeting in the nation's capital. The International Journal of Transportation Science and Technology presented the civil engineering

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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

of Cleveland, then New York – crossing the racial divide by bringing Black and white musicians together – as he does in this film – and even naming the music “rock ‘n’ roll.”

“The film captures some of the rebelliousness of that early era, but also efforts to calm parents amid that rebellion,” he said. “Ritchie Valens would die in a plane crash a few months after the movie was filmed and before it was even released. This is his only screen appearance.

“Eddie Cochran would himself die in a car crash in England the next year. Also, the same year the film came out, Chuck Berry would be charged with taking a teenage girl across state lines ‘for immoral purposes’ – and later go to prison for it – and the next year Alan Freed himself would get embroiled in a payola scandal that would ultimately ruin his career. So, the film captures a special moment before everything changes. Just a few years later comes the British Invasion.”



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Atkins said he was happy he was selected to co-host the show with Malone, who brought up another TCM connection.

“Back in 2016, I published an article about character actor Nehemiah Persoff in TCM host Eddie Muller’s magazine *Noir City*,” he said. “During my research for that article, I interviewed noted film writer Patrick McGilligan, who happened to head the ‘Screen Classics’ series for the University Press of Kentucky.

“After the interview, he asked me to consider writing a book on film and later suggested a Harry Dean Stanton biography for the publisher.”

[Click here](#) to read a Q&A with Atkins regarding his new book.

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