

# Lawrence John Nelson

Professor of History, University of North Alabama

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## EDUCATION

Ph.D. History, University of Missouri-Columbia, August 1972  
A.M. History, University of Missouri-Columbia, June 1967  
B.A. History, Evangel College, Springfield, MO, May 1966  
Diploma, Joliet (Illinois) Junior College, June 1964  
classes, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, attended 1970s

## PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Professor of History, University of North Alabama, August 1985-present (present rank since 1995)  
Assistant Professor, University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL, 1984-85, academic year and both summers (non-tenure track)  
Consultant, Pearl River County Library System (MS), June-Dec 1983 (Mississippi Committee for the Humanities scholar-in-residence type position)  
Associate Professor, Evangel College, Springfield, MO, 1978-83  
Coordinator of Long Range Planning, Southern California College (now Vanguard University of Southern California), Costa Mesa, CA, October 1976-July 1978; reported to college president  
Part-time positions include Southern California College, 1970s, Pasadena City College (CA), 1974-76; University of Missouri-Columbia, several, including Visiting Assistant Professor, summer 1973, and teaching assistant or other title for 7 semesters, 1968-71; led discussion section in church history at Fuller Theological Seminary (Pasadena, CA) for 2 quarters, 1974

## HONORS

### Teaching/Faculty Honors

Academic Affairs Award for Outstanding Teaching (2010)  
Outstanding Teacher of the Year, 1995-96 (Alpha Lambda Delta-sponsored student body election), University of North Alabama  
Certificate of Merit for the Outstanding Professor in the Department of History For Excellence in Teaching (election sponsored by Rho Theta Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta), University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL, presented May 1985  
Outstanding Faculty Award (student election sponsored by student government), Evangel College, awarded April 1983

Panhellenic Teacher of the Month, February 2002, University of North Alabama  
 Teacher of the Month, Jan-Feb 1998, Zeta Tau Alpha sorority, University of North Alabama  
 Teacher of the Week, October 1998, Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority, University of North Alabama  
 nominee, Professor of the Year (nominated by UNA), Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, June 1999

### **Publishing/Research Honors**

Bottimore Outstanding Academic Achievement Award 2004, April 2004, for *King Cotton's Advocate: Oscar G. Johnston and the New Deal*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999; and *Rumors of Indiscretion: The University of Missouri "Sex Questionnaire" Scandal in the Jazz Age*. Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2003 (Award included a \$5000 grant for further academic research, acquisition of resources, etc.)  
 2000 McLemore Prize for best book on Mississippi history or biography, by the Mississippi Historical Society, April 2000, for *King Cotton's Advocate*  
 Honorable Mention, Bottimore Outstanding Achievement Award, University of North Alabama, Dec 2000, for *King Cotton's Advocate*  
 Moore Memorial Award for best article in *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* during 1981, for "New Deal and Free Market: The Memphis Meeting of the Southern Commissioners of Agriculture, 1937," Fall 1981  
 research grants, numerous (Arts & Science, University), University of North Alabama, and others, over many years

### **Service Honors**

2002 Outstanding Service Award, University of North Alabama; awarded April 2002  
 The Sisters of Phi Mu Sorority: "For your continual support of the Theta Alpha Chapter of Phi Mu;" University of North Alabama; awarded April 26, 2008  
 Educational Service Award (by Picayune, MS, Association of Educators); awarded May 1984

### **Miscellaneous Honors**

Sammy O. Cranford Memorial Lecture in History, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS, April 2002  
 Alpha Tau Omega fraternity, honorary alumni, University of North Alabama; initiated 2003  
 Omicron Delta Kappa (leadership), University of North Alabama, initiated 1996  
 Alpha Lambda Delta (academic), honorary member, University of North Alabama; initiated 1994  
 Phi Kappa Phi (academic), University of North Alabama; initiated 1989  
 "Spring Fling King," University of North Alabama; awarded at Step-Sing 2002

## PUBLICATIONS/CONFERENCES

### Books

- Rumors of Indiscretion: The University of Missouri "Sex Questionnaire" Scandal in the Jazz Age.* Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2003
- King Cotton's Advocate: Oscar G. Johnston and the New Deal.* Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999
- The Last Great Year in Eisenhower's America: The Inside Story of Nikita Khrushchev's Cold War Journey into 1950s America* (tentative title; manuscript "complete" but undergoing revisions; proposal and sample chapters, etc., soon to be at a potential publisher)
- Majority of research completed on a new potential book project: tentative title: *Billy Graham in Gotham: The 1957 New York Crusade and the Triumph of Modern Evangelicalism* (for which two University Research Grants have been awarded)

### Conferences and Published Articles

- "Oscar Johnston, the New Deal, and the Cotton Subsidy Payments Controversy, 1936-1937," *Journal of Southern History*, 40 (August 1974), 399-416.
- "New Deal and Free Market: The Memphis Meeting of the Southern Commissioners of Agriculture, 1937," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 40 (Fall 1981), 225-38. An earlier draft of this paper was presented in a session of the Twenty-Third Missouri Valley Conference on History, Omaha, NE, March 7, 1980.
- "The Art of the Possible: Another Look at the 'Purge' of the AAA Liberals in 1935," *Agricultural History*, 57 (October 1983), 416-35. An earlier draft of this paper was presented in a session of the Twenty-Fourth Missouri Conference on History, Excelsior Springs, MO, April 9, 1982.
- "Welfare Capitalism on a Mississippi Plantation in the Great Depression," *Journal of Southern History*, 50 (May 1984), 225-50. An earlier draft of this paper was presented in a session of the Twenty-Third Missouri Conference on History, Columbia, Missouri, April 10, 1981.
- "Gainesville and Its Advocate: A Year in the Life of a Mississippi Frontier Town," *Gulf Coast Historical Review*, 1 (Fall 1985), 39-56. Earlier drafts appeared in installments in two Mississippi newspapers; portions were presented to a meeting of a genealogical society in Pearl River County, MS in 1983.
- "The Historian as Scholar-in-Residence: Public History in a South Mississippi County," *Federation Reports: The Journal of the State Humanities Councils*, 7 (Nov-Dec 1984 issue), 18-22. An earlier draft was presented to a session of state humanities councils, Biloxi, MS, March 1984.
- "The Demise of O'Reilly Hospital and the Beginning of Evangel College, 1946-1955," *Missouri Historical Review*, 81 (July 1987), 417-46.
- "Memorializing the Lost Cause in Florence, Alabama, 1866-1903," *The Alabama Review*, 41 (July 1988), 179-92. Drafts presented in a session of the Alabama Historical Association, Huntsville, AL, April 1987, and to the Tennessee Valley Historical Society, Lauderdale County, AL, October

1987, and to other groups.

"King Cotton Needs a Voice: The Organization of the National Cotton Council of America, 1938-1939," Eightieth Anniversary Symposium of the Agricultural History Society, Mississippi State University, Starkville, June 17, 1999. Extracted from *King Cotton's Advocate*.

## Encyclopedia Articles

"Commodity Credit Corporation;" "Davis, Chester;" "Frank, Jerome;" in *Encyclopedia of the Great Depression*, Robert S. McElvaine (editor in chief), New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004.

"National Cotton Council;" "Oscar Johnston;" "Delta and Pine Land Company;" in *Mississippi Encyclopedia*, Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, forthcoming.

## Newspapers

"Constitution came of age with peaceful transfer of power in 1801," *Birmingham News*, September 13, 1987 (part of bicentennial series)

The remaining newspaper articles were completed in connection with the Mississippi Committee for the Humanities grant to the Pearl River County (MS) Library System; the titles and text in the various publications may vary from newspaper to newspaper. Material from some of the articles is found in other publications listed above.

"Bilbo enchanted crowd at 1926 rally: Segregationist's rhetoric recalled in McNeill grove," *Hattiesburg American*, July 26, 1983; *Poplarville Democrat*, July 28, 1983; *Picayune Item*, July 31, 1983; *Mississippi Gulf Coast Sun*, October 13, 1983

"The lessons of Gainesville: Part I, One year in the life of a frontier town," *Picayune Item*, August 14, 1983; *Poplarville Democrat*, August 18, 1983

"The lessons of Gainesville: Part II, Slavery was an integral part of culture," *Picayune Item*, August 21, 1983; *Poplarville Democrat*, August 25, 1983

"The lessons of Gainesville: Part III, Railroad by-passed once-thriving town," *Picayune Item*, August 28, 1983; *Poplarville Democrat*, September 2, 1983

"Orville Carver: Remembering one Pearl River County man's sacrifice during the Great War," *Picayune Item*, September 4, 1983; *Poplarville Democrat*, September 15, 1983; *Hattiesburg American*, December 4, 1983 (shorter version)

"Methodist Centennial: Chapters from the first Quarter-Century--1883-1983," *Picayune Item*, September 18, 1983; *Poplarville Democrat*, September 22, 1983 (some of this material was utilized in a privately-printed history of the church, 1883-1983, by members of that church)

"'Maroon Tide' or 'Thin Red Line,' it's all the same," *Picayune Item*, October 2, 1983 (editor) "'Poplar Jim' or 'Popular Jim': A controversy in 1905 over the origins of Poplarville's name," *Picayune Item*, October 16, 1983; *Poplarville Democrat*, October 20, 1983

"Railroad brought economic life to Picayune," *Picayune Item*, November 18, 1983

"Part I: Prelude, 1939-41, Pearl River County during World War II,"

*Picayune Item*, October 30, 1983; *Poplarville Democrat*, December 1, 1983

"Part II: Blackout, Pearl River County during World War II," *Picayune Item*,

- November 6, 1983; *Poplarville Democrat*, December 8, 1983  
 "Part III: Rationing, Pearl River County during World War II," *Picayune Item*,  
 November 13, 1983; *Poplarville Democrat*, December 15, 1983  
 "Part IV: Sacrifice, Pearl River County during World War II," *Picayune Item*,  
 November 20, 1983; *Poplarville Democrat*, December 22, 1983  
 "Symbols reflect area's economic culture," *Picayune Item*, November 27, 1983  
 "Broom sticks and bus bodies: Depression-era innovations," *Picayune Item*,  
 December 4, 1983  
 "Caesar to Bay St. Louis: a two-day odyssey," *Picayune Item*, December 11, 1983  
 "County's early movie houses offered exciting fare," *Picayune Item*, December 25,  
 1983  
 "Nelson's visit was 'a Yankee's education'," *Picayune Item*, January 8, 1984  
 (portion also appeared in *Federation Reports*, above)

## Magazines

- "'This House is Yours'," *Decision*, January 1987 (Billy Graham Evangelistic  
 Association)  
 "Grace at the Intersection," *Pentecostal Evangel*, August 21, 1994  
 "Lowering the Nets on Whiskey Row," *Today's Pentecostal Evangel*, July 23, 2006

## Book Reviews

- Anders Walker, *The Ghost of Jim Crow: How Southern Moderates Used Brown v. Board of Education to Stall Civil Rights* (New York: Oxford University of Press, 2009), *Journal of Mississippi History*, forthcoming.  
 Theodore Saloutos, *The American Farmer and the New Deal* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1981), in *Journal of Southern History*, 49 (August 1983), 475-76.  
 John Hawkins Napier III, *Lower Pearl River's Piney Woods: Its Land and People* (University: University of Mississippi Center for the Study of Southern Culture, 1985), in *Gulf Coast Historical Review*, 2 (Fall 1986), 110-12.  
 Chester M. Morgan, *Redneck Liberal: Theodore G. Bilbo and the New Deal* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985), in *Journal of Southern History*, 53 (May 1987), 342-44.  
 David Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1986), in *History: Reviews of New Books*, 15 (January / February 1987), 73.  
 Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), in *The Alabama Review*, 43 (January 1990), 51-52.  
 Robert McNamara. *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (New York: Times Books, 1995) in *RiverViews*, July / August 1995, 47.  
 Samuel Hill, *One Name but Several Faces: Varieties in Popular Denominations in Southern History* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), in *North Carolina Historical Review* (October 1996), 507-08.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Referee/Comment

Referee on five potential articles for *Journal of Southern History* (most recent completed in 2009); referee on potential article for *Agricultural History*; asked to comment on one article for *Gulf Coast Historical Review*.

### Speeches/Addresses

Over the decades (1978-2010 and counting) I have spoken to scores of groups in various settings, including civic (such as Rotary, Civitan, Kiwanis, Lions), churches and church groups, retired groups, school (from elementary to college), historical, patriotic and women's groups, in open-air public (as in a dedication and a celebration), and even to a homebuilders association! Topics often included items cited under publications above; numerous speeches were given as part of my membership on the Bicentennial Speakers Bureau, Alabama Humanities Foundation, 1987; and during my scholar-in-residence activities as Consultant to the Pearl River County Library System in Mississippi, 1983.

### Committees/Sponsorship/Etc.

Over many years service has included various committee assignments, including--but not limited to--Chair, Educational Support Services Committee of self-study for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (5.1-5.4 of Criteria for Accreditation), 1990-92, Self-study Steering Committee (ex officio member), 1990-92, Academic Affairs Committee (faculty senate committee), University Research Committee, Commencement Committee, Arts and Sciences Research Grant Committee (several years), Chair, General Studies Degree committee for first student entering program (A & S), Convocations Committee, Chair, Phi Kappa Phi national scholarship competition committee, 1992-93, Library Committee, Facilities Committee (Willingham Hall), (student) Publications Board; Chair the Vice-President for Academic Affairs/Provost Search Advisory Committee, 2008-2009.

Faculty sponsor or co-sponsor for several student groups over many years; participation in various departmental and university/student activities, including emcee for history competition for high school students, sponsored by the History and Political Science Department and the Tennessee Valley Historical Society; speaking to Greek organizations on campus, etc. Also, judge at high school contests, American Legion oratorical contests, board of directors for Cooperative Campus Ministries, non-ordained pastor of a rural church, 1988-1997, etc. Interviews on local television and radio in Missouri and Alabama.

Notable student-requested activities:

ad hoc speaker for UNA Leadership Forum and SOAR

Emcee (with my wife): Mr. Spring Fling Pageant 2004

Emcee: Step-Sing 2006

Emcee: 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Panhellenic auctions (proceeds for Safeplace), 2009-2010

Order of Omega sponsored leadership address to new Greeks, 2009  
Emcee at other Greek activities, including (with my wife, Verlie, Zeta  
Tau Alpha's "Big Man on Campus" (2010); Emcee, Leadership UNA's  
"UNA's Got Talent" (April 15, 2010); Bible Study, Alpha Tau Omega  
Fraternity, 2010; Faculty Sponsor: Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity

Life member: Southern Historical Association

Married to Verlie M. Nelson (the best person on the planet): May 31, 1969

Children: Larry Peter Nelson (b. 1970; deceased)  
Peter John Nelson (b. 1975)  
Julia Suzanne Nelson Strickland (b. 1977)

Grandchildren: Samantha Suzanne Strickland (b. 2008)  
John William Strickland (b. 2009)