In Winter of 2000 the University of North Carolina Press published Lester Stephens's remarkable portrait of the activities of the 19th-century Charleston naturalists. The concentration of natural scientists made the Southern city one of the four major centers of botany, biology, and paleontology in the United States. Yet in no other American center were the conflicts between science and culture so disruptive. When the racial ideology of the white elite sought a scientific warrant, too many persons were willing to provide it. Yet the hero of Stephens's account, the eminent biologist Rev. John Bachman, resisted the efforts of 'racial scientists' such as Samuel Morton to construct a theory of polygenesis, a multiple origin for the several races of man. Bachman also resisted any suggestion of a hierarchy of racial types. Bachman's critique was conducted on scientific grounds, but its failure to convince the polygenacists showed the subordination of biological reasoning to pride and bias. Two scholars—Dr. Ann Fabian of Rutgers University and Dr. Al Sanders, curator of natural history at the Charleston Museum will join Prof. Stephens in a series of presentations exploring the conduct of scientific inquiry in the 19th-century South.

In 2000 the College of Charleston was informed that it was a finalist along with the University of Virginia for the location of the NEH Regional Humanities Center for the South Atlantic Region including the American West Indies. During the 2000-2001 academic year, members of the Humanities faculty and staff of Program in the Carolina Lowcountry and the Atlantic World were tasked to draft a final application/project proposal to be submitted in August 2001 to NEH. The final determination of the locale of the Regional Humanities Center will be made in November 2001 on the basis of these submissions. S. Max Edelson and Jack Bass of the College composed the proposal, aided by Vernon Burton, David Shields, and Dean Sam Hines. A board of external reviewers critiqued an initial draft in May 2001. Heeding the board's recommendations, Jack Bass oversaw the final composition of the document. Dean Hines conveyed the application to Washington, D.C. in person.

The projected Regional Humanities Center would perform three tasks: it would create knowledge; it would aid persons, communities, and institutions engaged in humanistic inquiry; and it would publicize the best work reflecting upon and traditions of the communities, places, races, and identities informing life in the region. The ultimate purpose of all its mandated activities would be to enrich the lives and cultural practices of the region's citizenry.

The South Atlantic Regional Humanities Center in Charleston would fulfill these ends through a variety of initiatives. It would foster new knowledge about the interconnectedness of the region's peoples and cultures with Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, and the American continent. By sponsoring research, holding colloquia, and enhancing access to archives, it would encourage the exploration of the Atlantic pathways that enabled peoples to move to and through the Southern coastal states and islands. It would dramatize the mobility and transmissibility of ideas, manners, goods, and cultural expression throughout the region's history.

The Charleston Center by supplying funds, facilities, information, and expert help would aid the initiatives of persons and institutions engaged in developing regional self-understanding and cultivating the life of the mind. In particular, it would collaborate with state-based humanities councils and committees and the historically black colleges and universities to deploy the results of humanistic inquiry to improve the quality of life in the region and to address critical areas of need, with special attention paid to the curricular needs of K-12 schools. Working with other regional centers, especially the Deep South and Mid Atlantic, it would develop initiatives that cross the boundaries of regions. To achieve inclusive representation of interests in the region it would engage in an ongoing dialogue and planning process with representatives of various institutions and communities.

Finally, the Center would make the public aware of the important work of the humanities and to improve access through a virtual center, public projects and conferences, and collaborations throughout the region.

If the College of Charleston were to be awarded the Regional Humanities Center, the Program in the Carolina Lowcountry and the Atlantic World would be expanded and renamed the Institute for the Study of the Atlantic World. The Institute would expand its mission of comparative study through research fellowships, academic events, and publications. It would form partnerships and stimulate new programs modeled on that of the Lowcountry and Atlantic World Program to investigate the Caribbean and the Chesapeake, the Piedmont and Appalachia as Atlantic places. The Institute would coordinate with other programs at the College in creating a broad interdisciplinary base for the Center. If the Regional Humanities Center is located in Charlottesville, CLAW would become one of the affiliate institutions of that Center, serving as a Charleston base of regional initiatives in humanities scholarship.
LECTURE AND READING: CARY PHILLIPS

On Thursday, October 4th, at 7:30 p.m. Alumni Hall at the College of Charleston CLAW is sponsoring a reading by British author Cary Phillips, whose novel "The First Fire" is just out in new fiction form. The Atlantic Sound will be half-listening, Darthon, Liverpool, and Accra. The reading is free and open to the public.

A native of St. Kitts in the West Indies and graduate of Queen's College, Oxford, England, Cary Phillips is a playwright, social commentator, and historian. His stage works include: "Strange Fruit" (1988), "When There Is Darkness" (1989), and "The Archer" (1994). He is the co-founder of his fiction series The First Fire. His most recent novel is "A Strange Country," published as "The Atlantic Sound," which explores the complex network of communities of aunts. Some have been impressed by the historical power of the Atlantic slave trade. Cary Phillips' novel is set in the late 19th century and spans a period of time ranging from the Middle Passage to the soul of an individual. Phillips initially journeys from the Caribbean to the British rainforest, reporting a journey he made to England in the summer of 1987 to conduct research on the back of the slave trade, which he now details about the true facts of his origins. His book, the west coast of Ghana, is one of the most important slaves in Africa, and now a tourist destination for African-Americans, and Charleston in the American South, celebrated as the city where the Civil War began—not for being the most fully captured by the Civil War, but for having been the most fully captured by the Civil War.

The reading will take place in Alumni Hall on Thursday, October 4th, at 7:30 p.m. Admission is free and open to the public.

MONEY, TRADE, AND POWER

The inaugural volumes of CLAW's book series will be released by the University of Press South Carolina this November. Dr. Gary Geoghegan, Senior Scholar at the University of South Carolina, and Robert H. Brink, Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, will present this course dealing with recent developments in the Atlantic World.

The series comprises comprehensive overviews of the economic, social, and political developments in society from the most powerful colony in the Deep South from South Carolina's founding through the mid-18th century. Essays explore the complex interplay of imperial expansion and settlement, and the creation of the slave system. The contributors include Margaret P. Bond, who addresses the imperial expansion and settlement, and the creation of the slave system. The contributors include Margaret P. Bond, William P. Kirsh, Michael J. Pate, and Mark A. Oliphant. These volumes are being published by the University of Press South Carolina, the University of South Carolina Press, and the University of North Carolina Press.

Money, Trade, and Power: The Atlantic World, 1607-1807

Volume 1: The Material World of Tidewater, the Lowcountry, and the Caribbean

The College of Charleston, June 7-9, 2002

Session 1: Poetry of Urban Space

1. Prof. Benjamin Groen, University of Delaware: "The Poetics of Compartment in Early Urban America"

2. Prof. Robert H. Brink, George University of Pennsylvania: "Spatial Frictions"

Session 2: Ruled Cities

1. William I. C. Jones, James Madison University: "James Madison's First City" (1788-1800)

2. Paul Hoffman, Louisiana State University: "St. Augustine, the First City, 1699-1809"

Session 3: The Material World of the Caribbean-Surinam

1. Roger J. Urban, University of South Carolina: "The Material World of the Caribbean-Surinam"

2. Brian Williams, University of Virginia: "The Caribbean-Surinam: How Efficient did the British and French Colonists Develop the Caribbean, 1600-1800?"

Session 4: African American Places and Spaces

1. Darnel Prince, University of Virginia: "African American Places and Spaces in 18th Century South Carolina and the Caribbean World"

2. Laurence S. Binyon, Florida A&M University: "First American Memory of the 18th Century and Caribbean Emancipations"
David S. Shields
Director of Program for the Carolina Lowcountry and the Atlantic World

Dr. David S. Shields of the Citadel has been appointed the new Director of the Program in the Carolina Lowcountry and the Atlantic World. A historian of early American literature and culture, Shields is known for his multidisciplinary, transatlantic approach to understanding the development of the sorts of communications that enabled civil society to form. Shields trained initially in material culture studies, serving in the early 1970s under Dr. Bill Kelso in the excavations of Kingsmill Plantation in Virginia. As an undergraduate at the College of William & Mary, he studied under the first generation social historians of the Chesapeake School and began to apply their insights to the study of the institutions that governed the production and reception of written communications. He took graduate degrees at Trinity College Dublin and the University of Chicago where he received his PhD in 1982. He taught at Vassar College from 1980-1984 and is currently professor of English at The Citadel.

As a literary scholar Shields contributed to the resurgence of historical inquiry among Early Americanists at a time when theory had come to dominate reflection. During the 1980s, he became involved in the initiatives that would lead to the “History of the Book” movement. He has published amply on the study of early southern literature and the institution of a women’s world of letters. Author of Oracles of Empire (Chicago UP 1990) and Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America (1997), Shields employed a host of newly-discovered materials to construct large scale portraits of the dynamics of literary culture during the 18th century. He is co-author of the first volume of the Cambridge History of American Literature and the first volume of the History of the Book in America. He currently edits the journal Early American Literature and serves as chair to the Advisory Committee to the American Antiquarian Society’s Program in the History of the Book.

A participant for some years in the activities of the Program in the Carolina Lowcountry and the Atlantic World, Shields takes over its direction from Prof. Jack P. Greene, who has superintended the Program’s work since 1995. He will work with associate directors Simon Lewis and Rosemary Brana-Shute, long-time participants.