

1-2005

## Museletter: January 2005

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# Museletter

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***Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* by John Berendt**

**A Review by Caroline Osborne**

Eccentric characters set in the tree shaded, moss hanging, genteel town of Savannah, Georgia that is anything but genteel when one digs below the surface; against this backdrop John Berendt tells the true crime story of the 1981 shooting of Danny Hansford by the colorful Jim Williams. Murder or self-defense? The twists and turns of the mystery surrounding the circumstances of Danny Hansford's death in the early hours of May 2, 1981, and the four trials that followed, complete with tales of trial strategy and shifting evidence, are sufficient to make the book a "must read", but it is the observations and descriptions of Savannah society, replete with the depiction of some of its more unconventional residents, that make this a book that the reader cannot put down.

*Continued on Page 2*

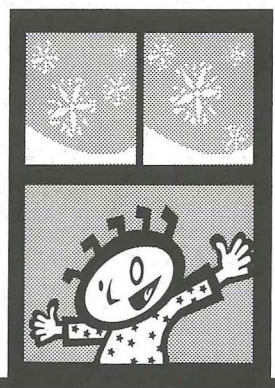
**Spring 2005  
Regular  
Library Hours**

**Sunday**  
10:00 a.m. - Midnight

**Mon.-Thurs.**  
7:30 a.m. - Midnight

**Friday**  
7:30 a.m.- 9:00 p.m.

**Saturday**  
9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.



***MIDNIGHT IN THE GARDEN OF GOOD AND EVIL***

**TO OPEN LAW SCHOOL FILM FESTIVAL**

**Remarks by Trial Lawyer "Sonny" Seiler to Follow**

The University of Richmond School of Law will kick off its first film festival on Thursday, **January 27, at 5:30 p.m.** with a showing of Clint Eastwood's *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. Based on the book by John Berendt, *Midnight's* cameras wander through the houses, squares, cemeteries, and courtrooms of Savannah, Georgia, in search of the truth about Jim Williams, tried four times for the murder of his lover, who was shot in the middle of Williams' antique-packed antebellum mansion.

*Continued on Page 2*



*Midnight, a Review continued from page 1*

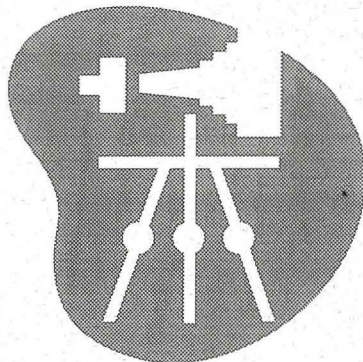
A hybrid of Charleston, South Carolina, where manners and breeding reign, and the more decadent New Orleans, Berendt introduces the reader to a Savannah that the casual observer would never know existed and that many of Savannah's more genteel residents might prefer remain obscure and which, but for the town's penchant for gossip, might remain undetected. Jim Williams, the new-moned antique dealer and self made millionaire, who has a questionable relationship with Danny Hansford, the volatile and very dead young man lying on the ornate floor of William's restored mansion located on Savannah's prestigious Monterey Square; the Lady Chablis, an entertainer with a somewhat unique performance; the voodoo high priestess; the Married Women's Card Club; the Black Debutantes' Ball; and lawyer "Sonny" Seiler, perhaps best known as the owner of the mascot of the University of Georgia—all participate in the intricate true crime story told in *Midnight*. The book is both a true crime novel and an exposé of life in the old South. A life and a type of society that many unfamiliar with the South might think died long ago yet is still preserved.

*Film Festival continued from Page 1*

However, the ensuing investigation and trials are merely a stage for the unfolding of Savannah's unique celebrities, from the "Lady of Six Thousand Songs" to a blues-belting drag queen to UGA, the bulldog mascot of the University of Georgia football team.

Immediately following the film, the audience will hear from Frank W. ("Sonny") Seiler, a practicing attorney with Bouhan, Williams & Levy LLP in Savannah. Seiler defended Williams in three of his four trials and is featured prominently in the book. While Seiler yielded his role to actor Jack Thompson for the movie, he secured a cameo for himself as one of the trial judges. Finally, and perhaps most notably, Seiler is the proud owner of UGA and one of the leading boosters of the University of Georgia. Seiler will spend a few minutes talking about the strategies and logistics of the Williams trials, as well as adding a few interesting tales about Savannah--and, yes, probably an UGA story as well.

The film festival is free and open to the public. A reception will follow Seiler's remarks.





## LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW

### INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

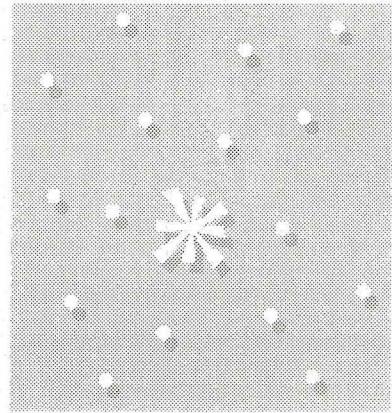
So you wake up in the morning, look out side and everything is covered in a blanket of white. You immediately reflect upon the wonderful memories of snow days when school was cancelled offering you an unexpected day of vacation. Reality sets in when you remember you are in law school now. Not to fear, the law school and the Law Library have an inclement weather policy. The Law Library follows the lead of the law school and the University. If either the law school or the University announces a delayed opening the Law Library will follow suit and open at the announced delayed time. This allows the facilities crew to clean the side walks and parking lots to permit safe access to the building.

The law school's inclement weather policy, as previously distributed in Jean Dudley's email of November 30, 2004, is as follows:

The law school generally follows the lead of the University, and University closings will be announced on all local TV stations (Channels 6, 8, 12 and 23) and radio stations (AM 1140, FM 94.5, FM 88.9) as well as the University Emergency Hotline at 289-8760. Every attempt will be made to make these decisions in a timely manner.

Because the law school administration is aware that the majority of law students commute (unlike undergraduates), there will be times that the law school decides to close even though the University remains open. This will also be announced through the above mediums.

If the law school is **NOT** closed in inclement weather, individual professors may still decide to cancel classes, and they notify the Dean's Office to that effect. Students should call the Dean's Office (289-8740) for class cancellations, which are announced via our voice mail. This message is updated as further cancellations occur throughout the day.

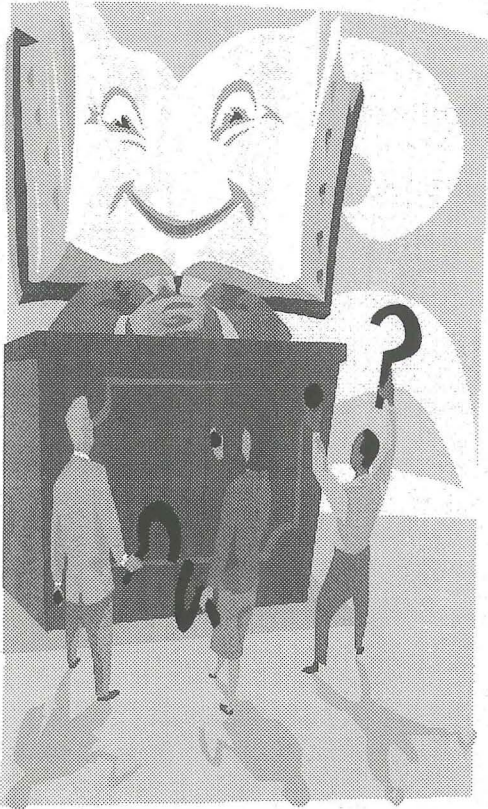


#### Overheard . . .

Lawyer woke up in a hospital room. He had no idea how he had gotten there. He rang the buzzer and soon the nurse came. "What happened?" he demanded. "You were hit by a truck while crossing the street. You've been unconscious for three days. But don't worry, you'll recover." His face brightened. "Recover? How much?!"







**Got a Question?**

**Need Help Finding Information for a Paper?**

**Need Help with a Class Assignment?**

**Need Help with a Work Assignment?**

**Consult your Reference Librarian.**

**Reference Librarians are available Monday through  
Thursday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.;  
Saturday and Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.**

**or via email at**

**[lawrefdesk@richmond.edu](mailto:lawrefdesk@richmond.edu)**

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