

## Slave ownership makes for complicated familial histories

February 23, 2018 2:15 PM Zharia Jeffries  
newwave@tulane.edu



On March 6, author Edward Ball will lead a talk, “Life of a Klansman,” exploring the life of Ball’s great-grandfather, who violently opposed racial democracy in Louisiana between 1865 and 1877.

On March 6, author Edward Ball will lead a talk titled “Life of a Klansman,” exploring the life of Ball’s great-grandfather, who violently opposed racial democracy in Louisiana between 1865 and 1877.

Ball will discuss the birth of white identity through the eyes of his great-grandfather, a French-Creole carpenter and Klansman, to better understand why attempts at racial equity failed and how that failure gave way to white supremacy.

“White people in Louisiana — by the hundreds of thousands — come from former slaveholding families,” said Ball. “In addition, many come from families that fought for white supremacy in the various movements to maintain white domination, from white citizens’ councils, to the Ku Klux Klan, to the White League, all of which were very popular among millions of Louisianans.”

Ball is the inaugural Gulf South Writer in the Woods and author of five nonfiction books including *Slaves in the Family*, in which he opens up about his family’s history of slave ownership on a South Carolina plantation.

“The New Orleans Center for the Gulf South supports place-based programming that furthers the conversation of our local communities,” said Denise Frazier, assistant director of the New Orleans Center for the Gulf South. “Edward Ball’s story presents a microcosmic look into a greater national epidemic: racism, its roots and many forms.”

The event, sponsored by [The New Orleans Center for the Gulf South](#) and [A Studio in the Woods](#), is open to the public and begins at 7 p.m. at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of New Orleans, 2903 Jefferson Ave.

For more information, contact Regina Cairns at the New Orleans Center for the Gulf South at 504-314-2854 or by email at [rcairns@tulane.edu](mailto:rcairns@tulane.edu).

“Edward Ball’s story presents a microcosmic look into a greater national epidemic: racism, its roots and many forms.”

— Denise Frazier, assistant director of the New Orleans Center for the Gulf South