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## Micah Fields selected as 2018 Oxford American Jeff Baskin Writers Fellow

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS—In 2017, the Oxford American Literary Project launched the Oxford American Jeff Baskin Writers Fellowship. Designed to support the writing of a debut book of creative nonfiction, the fellowship offers the winner a \$10,000 living stipend, housing, and an editorial apprenticeship with the *Oxford American* toward a nine-month residency.

The fellowship is funded with support from Argenta Wealth Management, ACANSA, Argenta Arts Foundation, Tenenbaum Recycling Group, Argenta Flats Apartments, and Salter Properties.

We are proud to share that **Micah Fields**, a 2018 graduate of the MFA in nonfiction writing program at the University of Iowa, is the recipient of this year's fellowship. Fields will spend his fellowship working on a manuscript titled *We Hold Our Breath*. In his proposal, Fields wrote: "My proposed manuscript . . . is a book of narrative nonfiction about the singular city of Houston, the Texas Gulf Coast, and the wild relationship between that region's history of art, industry, and natural disaster. *We Hold Our Breath* deals with the space and time between two nearly identical storms—Hurricane Carla (1961) and Hurricane Harvey (2017)—using the story of their impact to inform the contemporary understanding of a region and its cultural significance."

Award-winning writers and OA contributors **Alex Mar**, **Zandria F. Robinson**, and **Timothy B. Tyson** selected Fields after a blind judging process. Robinson praised Fields's work sample in the following citation: "Micah Fields's manuscript *We Hold Our Breath* quite breathlessly blends the rural and urban, past and present, and industrial and postmodern Souths in an artful Texas tale of humans and other animals working with and against land and nature on that state's coast and in its most populous city."

Fields's fellowship in Central Arkansas will run from August 2018 until May 2019. The inaugural Baskin Fellow, Molly McCully Brown, concluded her fellowship in May 2018. Her essay "The Cost of Certainty" was published in the OA's 100th issue. She is the recipient of the 2018-2019 Amy Lowell Poetry Traveling Scholarship.

For more information about the Oxford American Jeff Baskin Writers Fellowship, visit [oxfordamerican.org/fellowship](http://oxfordamerican.org/fellowship).

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### ABOUT THE OXFORD AMERICAN

*Oxford American* is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization and national magazine dedicated to featuring the very best in Southern writing, while documenting the complexity and vitality of the American South. The *Oxford American* is committed to the development of young individuals aspiring to work in the publishing industry and to the production and presentation of multidisciplinary arts events in and around Little Rock, Arkansas. Billed as "A Magazine of the South," it has won four National Magazine Awards—including the 2016 Award for General Excellence in the category of Literature, Science and Politics—and other high honors since it began publication in 1992. The *Oxford American* is published in partnership with the University of Central Arkansas. For more information, visit [OxfordAmerican.org](http://OxfordAmerican.org).

### ABOUT JEFF BASKIN

A librarian by trade, Jeff Baskin was a lifelong and generous literary citizen. Over his thirty years running Laman Library, he built the North Little Rock Public Library System into one of the most respected library systems in the region. With his leadership and creative approach to programming, the library brought reading, art and theater to countless children and adults. In 2010, Jeff initiated the Laman Writers Fellowship, a prestigious, annual award honoring Arkansas writers. When he passed away in 2014, Jeff left behind a tremendous legacy. The Oxford American Jeff Baskin Writers Fellowship continues that legacy.