



Friends of Houston Cole Library

Noted Author Bret Lott to Speak at Friends of Houston Cole Library, JSU, Thursday, September 21, 2006



Bret Lott, who was catapulted to national significance when *Jewel*-- based on the life of his grandmother who gave loving care to her Downs-syndrome child-- was chosen for *Oprah's Bookclub*, will speak as the fall semester program for the Friends of Houston Cole Library on Thursday, September 21, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. Lott puts the whirlwind experience of being chosen by the "book goddess" into perspective in a personal essay, "Toward Humility," that concludes his captivating *Before We Get Started*. His more recent fiction has won him accolades, and he now is editor of *The Southern Review*.

Bret Lott is the author of eleven books, most recently the story collection *The Difference Between Women and Men* (Random House, July 2005), *Before We Get Started: A Practical Memoir of the Writer's Life* (Ballantine Books, 2005), and the bestselling novel *A Song I Knew by Heart* (Random House, 2004). His short stories and essays have been widely anthologized, and have appeared in such journals as *The Yale Review*, *Story*, *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Antioch Review*, *Gettysburg Review*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Iowa Review* and *The Southern Review*, and have been read on National Public Radio in nationwide broadcasts. Originally from Los Angeles, he received his MFA in writing from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where he studied with James Baldwin.

From 1986 to 2004 he was Writer-in-Residence and Professor of English at The College of Charleston in Charleston, South Carolina; he and his wife Melanie now live in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he is Editor and Director of *The Southern Review* and Professor of English at Louisiana State University.

Mr. Lott has given readings and lectures across the country and around the world, including The White House, the American Center in Jerusalem, and Charles University in Prague. He is also a recipient of a Fulbright American Scholar appointment to Bar-Ilan University in Tel Aviv, and has twice served as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowships. He and his wife have two children: Zebulun, age 23 and a recent graduate of Furman University; and Jacob, age 20 and a sophomore at the College of Charleston.

Copies of Mr. Lott's most recent books will be available for purchase and signing. Refreshments follow the program. Open to the public.