

The Thanatos Syndrome By Walker Percy

In "Message" i'n the " Bottle," Walker Percy offers insights on such varied yet interconnected subjects as symbolic reasoning, the origins of mankind, Helen Keller, Semioticism, and the incredible Delta Factor. Confronting difficult philosophical questions with a novelist's eye, Percy rewards us again and again with his keen insights into the way that language possesses all of us.

In **Peculiar Crossroads**, Farrell O’Gorman explains how the radical religiosity of both Flannery O’Connor’s and Walker Percy’s vision made them so valuable as southern fiction writers and social critics. Via their spiritual and philosophical concerns, O’Gorman asserts, these two unabashedly Catholic authors bequeathed a postmodern South of shopping malls and interstates imbued with as much meaning as Appomattox or Yoknapatawpha. O’Gorman builds his argument with biographical, historical, literary, and theological evidence, examining the writers’ work through intriguing pairings, such as O’Connor’s *Wise Blood* with Percy’s *The Moviegoer*, and O’Connor’s *A Good Man Is Hard to Find* with Percy’s *Lancelot*. An impeccable exercise in literary history and criticism, *Peculiar Crossroads* renders a genuine understanding of the Catholic sensibility of both O’Connor and Percy and their influence among contemporary southern writers.

“A mock self-help book designed not to help but to provoke . . . to inveigle us into thinking about who we are and how we got into this mess.” (Los Angeles Times Book Review). Filled with quizzes, essays, short stories, and diagrams, *Lost in the Cosmos* is National Book Award-winning author Walker Percy’s humorous take on a familiar genre—as well as an invitation to serious contemplation of life’s biggest questions. One part parody and two parts philosophy, *Lost in the Cosmos* is an enlightening guide to the dilemmas of human existence, and an unrivaled spin on self-help manuals by one of modern America’s greatest literary masters.

The Thanatos SyndromeA NovelOpen Road Media Peculiar Crossroads

Love in the Ruins and the Thanatos Syndrome Language and Diminished Self in Walker Percy's The Thanatos Syndrome The Message in the Bottle Pilgrim in the Ruins

Percy’s stirring sequel to *Love in the Ruins* follows Tom More’s redemptive mission to cure the mysterious ailment afflicting the residents of his hometownDr. Tom More returns to his parish in Louisiana determined to live a simpler life. Fresh out of prison after getting caught selling uppers to truck drivers, he wants nothing more than to live “a small life.” But when everyone in town begins acting strangely—from losing their sexual inhibitions to speaking only in blunt, truncated sentences—More, with help from his cousin Lucy Lipscomb, takes it upon himself to reveal what and who is responsible. Their investigation leads them to the highest seats of power, where they discover that a government conspiracy is poised to rob its citizens of their selves, their free will, and ultimately their humanity. In this criticism of Percy, John F. Desmond traces the writer’s enduring concerns with community. These concerns, Desmond argues, were grounded in the realism of such Scholastics as Aquinas and Duns Scotus.

Walker Percy (1916–1990) considered novels the strongest tool with which to popularize great ideas among a broad audience, and, more than half a century after they first appeared in print, his works of fiction continue to fascinate contemporary readers. Despite their lasting appeal, however, Percy’s engaging narratives also contain intellectual elements that demand further explication. Philosophical themes, including existentialism, language acquisition theory, and modern Catholic theology, provide a deeper layer of meaning in Percy’s writings. Jessica Hooten Wilson’s *Reading Walker Percy’s Novels* serves as a companion guide for readers who enjoy Percy’s novels but may be less familiar with the works of Sartre, Camus, Kierkegaard, and Dante. In addition to clarifying Percy’s philosophies, Wilson highlights allusions to other writers within his narratives, addresses historical and political contexts, and provides insight into the creation and reception of *The Moviegoer*, *The Last Gentleman*, *Love in the Ruins*, *Lancelot*, *The Second Coming*, and *The Thanatos Syndrome*. An introduction covers aspects of Percy’s biography that influenced his writing, including his deep southern roots, faith, and search for meaning in life. An appendix offers an explanation of Percy’s satirical parody *Lost in the Cosmos: The Last Self-Help Book*. Written in an accessible and conversational style, this primer will appeal to everyone who appreciates the nuances of Walker Percy’s fiction.

"A curious, tender book, provocatively and intelligently imagined." SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE Binx Bolling is s small-time stockbroker who lives quietly in suburban New Orleans, pursuing an interest in the movies, affairs with his secretaries, and living out his days. But soon he finds himself on a "search" for something more important, something that will measure and mark and hold his life forever against the passage of time. And one fateful Mardi Gras week, he finds it in a way, and with a woman, he would never have expected.... "A brilliant novel...Percy touches the rim of so many human mysteries." HARPER'S From the author of THE THANATOS SYNDROME.

Understanding Walker Percy

Desire, Violence, and Divinity in Modern Southern Fiction

Lost in the Cosmos

American Utopia and Social Engineering in Literature, Social Thought, and Political History

Love in the Ruins and The Thanatos Syndrome

The Last Physician

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize “A masterwork . . . the novel astonishes with its inventiveness . . . it is nothing less than a grand comic fugue.”—The New York Times Book Review A Confederacy of Dunces is an American comic masterpiece. John Kennedy Toole’s hero, one Ignatius J. Reilly, is "huge, obese, fractious, fastidious, a latter-day Gargantua, a Don Quixote of the French Quarter. His story bursts with wholly original characters, denizens of New Orleans’ lower depths, incredibly true-to-life dialogue, and the zaniest series of high and low comic adventures" (Henry Kisor, Chicago Sun-Times).

Dr. Tom More investigates a sudden outbreak of unusual behavior in Feliciana, Louisiana, and uncovers a criminal experiment to "improve" behavior patterns through the secret use of durgs in the local water supply A pair of profound dystopian novels from the “brilliantly breathtaking” New York Times–bestselling and National Book Award–winning author of The Moviegoer (The New York Times Book Review). Winner of the National Book Award for The Moviegoer, the “dazzlingly gifted” Southern philosophical author Walker Percy wrote two vividly imagined satirical novels of America’s future featuring deeply flawed psychiatrist and spiritual seeker Tom More (USA Today). Love in the Ruins is “a great adventure . . . so outrageous and so real, one is left speechless” (Chicago Sun-Times), and its sequel The Thanatos Syndrome “shimmers with intelligence and verve” (Newsday). Love in the Ruins: The great experiment of the American dream has failed. The United States is on the brink of catastrophe. Can an alcoholic, womanizing, lapsed-Catholic psychiatrist really save a society speeding toward inevitable collapse? Dr. Thomas More certainly thinks so. He has invented the lapsometer, a machine capable of diagnosing and curing the country’s spiritual afflictions. If used correctly, the lapsometer could make anxiety, depression, alienation, and racism things of the past. But in the wrong hands, it could rapidly propel the nation into chaos. “A comedy of love against a field of anarchy . . . Percy is easily one of the finest writers we have.” —The New York Times Book Review The Thanatos Syndrome: In Percy’s “ingenious” sequel, Dr. Tom More, fresh out of prison after getting caught selling uppers to truck drivers, returns home to Louisiana, determined to live a simpler life (The New York Times). But when everyone in town starts acting strangely—from losing their sexual inhibitions to speaking only in blunt, truncated sentences—More, with help from his cousin, epidemiologist Lucy Lipscomb, takes it upon himself to investigate. Together, they uncover a government conspiracy poised to rob its citizens of their selves, their free will, and ultimately their humanity. “The Thanatos Syndrome has the ambition and purposefulness to take on the world, to wrestle with its shortcomings, and to celebrate its glories.” —The Washington Post Book World Walker Percy and the Politics of the Wayfarer is the first sustained treatment of Percy as a political thinker. The book argues that Percy provides a distinctive approach to politics, one that might allow us to give up the dangerous longing for limitless progress and perfection in our lives.

Signposts in a Strange Land

The Adventures of a Bad Catholic at a Time Near the End of the World

Walker Percy Remembered

Flannery O’Connor, Walker Percy, and Catholic Vision in Postwar Southern Fiction

The Thanatos Syndrome

Recovering the Human in an Ideological Age

Collection of essays on the connection between medicine and literature and how novelists and physicians are both, in a sense, diagnosticians; the book focuses, in particular, on Walker Percy, a writer who had trained as a pathologist.

When The Moviegoer, an extraordinary first novel by an unknown Louisiana author, won the National Book Award in 1962, it marked the arrival of an exceptional literary talent. With his five successive novels and his wide-ranging philosophical and occasional essays, Walker Percy shored up his reputation as one of America’s greatest writers - an ironic moralist and perhaps the shrewdest chronicler of life in the New South. Yet even by the time of his death in 1990, little was known about this intensely private man. Based on extensive interviews, written with access to Percy’s letters and manuscripts, Jay Tolson has fashioned the first major biography of the writer, an authoritative portrait that brings Percy alive as it illuminates his distinguished body of work. We see Percy’s life and his brilliant career against the background of the American South, whose colorful and tragic history is rooted deeply in the hearts and minds of its most talented sons and daughters. With a novelist’s eye for character and the judgment of an informed critic, Tolson captures the lifelong drama of genius, always attentive to its artistic, psychological and spiritual dimensions. Percy was the scion of a proud, honorable and accomplished family, a clan haunted by a crippling streak of melancholy that issued repeatedly in suicides, including the self-inflicted deaths of Walker Percy’s father and grandfather. Tolson depicts the struggle of Percy’s life and the heroism with which he battled his family demons (and his own tubercular condition) and worked his way toward a writing career. Here is the young Percy in the days after his father’s death, traveling with his brother and his mother (who would soon dieherself, in mysterious circumstances) from his childhood home of Birmingham, Alabama, to Athens, Georgia, and then on to Greenville, Mississippi, and the sprawling house of his Uncle Will. Adopted at 16 by this remarkable "bachelor-poet-lawyer-planter", the most important single influence on the future author’s life, Percy came to maturity in what he later described as an "all-male household visited regularly by other poets, politicians, psychiatrists, sociologists, black preachers, folk singers, Civil Rights leaders and itinerant guitar players". We follow Percy as he travels north to New York, where he attended medical school and - with the help of a psychiatrist - began to make sense of his complex family legacy. Tolson details Percy’s movement toward the Catholic Church, his first struggles as a writer, his early involvement with the publishing world, the steady support of his friend and fellow writer Shelby Foote, and a demanding apprenticeship under the supervision of the gifted novelist Caroline Gordon and her husband, the late Allen Tate. Percy emerged an altogether distinctive writer: a Catholic artist who, like Flannery O’Connor, worked in a predominantly Protestant culture; an heir to the literary traditions of the Southern Renaissance who adopted the strategies of modern European fiction and philosophy to forge his own narrative art. Tolson guides us through the creation of both the unpublished and published novels - from The Charterhouse through The Thanatos Syndrome - as well as the philosophical works that underlie and complement Percy’s fiction. The biographer shows us how the demands of his work were eased by rich friendships, including those with fellow writers Thomas-Merton, Eudora Welty and Robert Coles. We learn also about a marriage of abiding strength, and of the love and care that Percy and his wife Bunt gave to the raising of their two daughters, one of them all but deaf from birth. Above all, we see the man in all his shifting moods, "the gracious, easy, almost avuncular manner straining against a powerful, furious intensity, an almost furious energy". Here is the dark tragedy, the humor, and the hard-earned wisdom of a life whose outward calm concealed an internal drama - an unrelenting fight against hopelessness and despair. Percy’s story is that of a writer and moralist who made enduring art out of his search for truth.

The novels of Walker Percy--The Moviegoer, Lancelot, The Second Coming, and The Thanatos Syndrome to name a few--have left a permanent mark on twentieth-century Southern fiction; yet the history of the Percy family in America matches anything, perhaps, that he could have created. Two centuries of wealth, literary accomplishment, political leadership, depression, and sometimes suicide established a fascinating legacy that lies behind Walker Percy’s acclaimed prose and profound insight into the human condition. In The House of Percy, Bertram Wyatt-Brown masterfully interprets the life of this gifted family, drawing out the twin themes of an inherited inclination to despondency and an abiding sense of honor. The Percy family roots in Mississippi and Louisiana go back to "Don Carlos" Percy, an eighteenth-century soldier of fortune who amassed a large estate but fell victim to mental disorder and suicide. Wyatt-Brown traces the Percys through the slaveholding heyday of antebellum Natchez, the ravages of the Civil War (which produced the heroic Colonel William Alexander Percy, the "Gray Eagle"), and a return to prominence in the Mississippi Delta after Reconstruction. In addition, the author recovers the tragic lives and literary achievements of several Percy-related women, including Sarah Dorsey, a popular post-Civil War novelist who horrified her relatives by befriending Jefferson Davis—a married man--and bequeathing to him her plantation home, Beauvoir, along with her entire fortune. Wyatt-Brown then chronicles the life of Senator LeRoy Percy, whose climactic re-election loss in 1911 to a racist demagogue deply stung the family pride, but inspired his bold defiance to the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s. The author goes on to tell the poignant story of poet and war hero Will Percy, the Senator’s son. The weight of this family narrative found expression in Will Percy’s memoirs, Lanterns on the Levee--and in the works of Walker Percy, who was reared in his cousin Will’s Greenville home after the suicidal death of Walker’s father and his mother’s drowning. As the biography of a powerful dynasty, steeped in Southern traditions and claims to kinship with English nobility, The House of Percy shows the interrelationship of legend, depression, and grand achievement. Written by a leading scholar of the South, it weaves together intensive research and thoughtful insights into a riveting, unforgettable story. Addresses a number of crucial issues, including the manner in which employers & unions formulate strategies, the specific tactics utilized by both sides, & the impact of strategies & tactics on union organizing effectiveness.

American Fiction, Biotechnology, and the Ethics of Personhood

How Queer Man Is, how Queer Language Is, and what One Has to Do with the Other

The House of Percy

A Confederacy of Dunces

The Fiction of Walker Percy

A Portrait in the Words of Those who Knew Him

Prophets of the Posthuman provides a fresh and original reading of fictional narratives that raise the question of what it means to be human in the face of rapidly developing bioenhancement technologies. Christina Bieber Lake argues that works by Nathaniel Hawthorne, Walker Percy, Flannery O’Connor, Toni Morrison, George Saunders, Marilynne Robinson, Raymond Carver, James Tiptree, Jr., and Margaret Atwood must be reevaluated in light of their contributions to larger ethical questions. Drawing on a wide range of sources in philosophical and theological ethics, Lake claims that these writers share a commitment to maintaining a category of personhood more meaningful than that allowed by utilitarian ethics. Prophets of the Posthuman insists that because technology can never ask whether we should do something that we have the power to do, literature must step into that role. Each of the chapters of this interdisciplinary study sets up a typical ethical scenario regarding human enhancement technology and then illustrates how a work of fiction uniquely speaks to that scenario, exposing a realm of human motivations that might otherwise be overlooked or simplified. Through the vision of the writers she discusses, Lake uncovers a deep critique of the ascendancy of personal autonomy as America ’ s most cherished value. This ascendancy, coupled with technology ’ s glamorous promises of happiness, helps to shape a utilitarian view of persons that makes responsible ethical behavior toward one another almost impossible. Prophets of the Posthuman charts the essential role that literature must play in the continuing conversation of what it means to be human in a posthuman world.

“ A modern knight-errant on a quest after evil; grotesque, convincing and chilling. ” —The New York Times Book ReviewFed up with the excesses of the 1970s, Lancelot Andrews Lamar, a liberal lawyer and distinguished member of the New Orleans gentry, is determined to stop the modern world ’ s ethical collapse. His quest begins with his wife—an actress who he suspects has been cheating on him for years. Though he initially plans only to gather proof of her infidelity, Lancelot quickly descends into a fog of obsession. And as he crosses the line from sanity into madness, he will try once and for all to purify the world or destroy it in the attempt. Mesmerizing and unforgettable, Lancelot is a masterful story of one man ’ s collision with the follies of modern culture, and a thought-provoking look at the nature of good and evil.

In this National Book Award – winning novel from a “ brilliantly breathtaking writer, ” a young Southerner searches for meaning in the midst of Mardi Gras (The New York Times Book Review). On the cusp of his thirtieth birthday, Binx Bolling is a lost soul. A stockbroker and member of an established New Orleans family, Binx ’ s one escape is the movie theater that transports him from the falseness of his life. With Mardi Gras in full swing, Binx, along with his cousin Kate, sets out to find his true purpose amid the excesses of the carnival that surrounds him. Buoyant yet powerful, The Moviegoer is a poignant indictment of modern values, and an unforgettable story of a week that will change two lives forever. This ebook features an illustrated biography of Walker Percy including rare photos from the author ’ s estate.

Interviews with Walker Percy’s family, close friends, and acquaintances, by David Horace Harwell.

Diagnosing the Modern Malaise

The Language of Angels and Beasts

Reading Walker Percy’s Novels

Novelist and Philosopher

Walker Percy’s Search for Community

Prophets of the Posthuman

In Walker Percy: Books of Revelations, Gary M. Ciuba examines how Percy’s apocalyptic vision inspires the structure, themes, and strategies of his fiction. This book explores the unity of the southern novelist’s fiction by focusing on its religious and artistic design—one of the first studies to approach Percy’s work from this perspective. Ciuba considers Percy’s six published novels—The Moviegoer, The Last Gentleman, Love in the Ruins, Lancelot, The Second Coming, and The Thanatos Syndrome—and also offers the first extended critical analysis of his unpublished work “The Gramercy Winner.” Although the novels are often seen as increasingly satiric jeremiads about the possible doom of America, Ciuba argues that Percy’s fiction is principally shaped by a demythologized and partially realized form of eschatology. This apocalyptic vision has less to do with the end of the external world than with the demise of the protagonists’ internal worldviews. According to Ciuba, Percy does more than offer direly comic warnings about the end of the world; he shows how the world actually ends and then may begin again in the everyday lives and extraordinary loves of his astonished seers.

Writings on the South, Catholicism, and more from the National Book Award winner: “His nonfiction is always entertaining and enlightening” (Library Journal). Published just after Walker Percy’s death, *Signposts in a Strange Land* takes readers through the philosophical, religious, and literary ideas of one of the South’s most profound and unique thinkers. Each essay is laced with wit and insight into the human condition. From race relations and the mysteries of existence, to Catholicism and the joys of drinking bourbon, this collection offers a window into the underpinnings of Percy’s celebrated novels and brings to light the stirring thoughts and voice of a giant of twentieth century literature.

A “brilliant and hilarious” novel of the end times in America and one psychiatrist’s quest to save mankind, from a New York Times–bestselling author (Dallas Morning News). The United States seems to be on the brink of catastrophe. From the abandoned cars littering the highways (no one remembers how to fix them) to the endless hours spent on the golf course (now open twenty-four hours for those who can’t bother to wait until daylight to putt) to the starkly polarized political and religious factions dividing the country (which are increasingly difficult to tell apart), it is startlingly evident that the great experiment of the American Dream has failed. The only problem is that no one has noticed. No one, that is, except Dr. Thomas More. Dr. More, an alcoholic, womanizing, lapsed-Catholic psychiatrist, has invented the lapsometer: a machine capable of diagnosing and curing the spiritual afflictions that are speeding society toward its inevitable collapse. If used correctly, the lapsometer could make anxiety, depression, alienation, and racism things of the past. But, in the wrong hands, it could propel the nation even more quickly into chaos. Hailed as “vividly entertaining” by the Los Angeles Times and “profoundly moving” by the Milwaukee Journal, *Love in the Ruins* is a towering, mind-bending work of satirical speculative fiction by the National Book Award–winning author of *The Moviegoer*.

The United States today is afflicted with political alienation, militarized violence, institutionalized poverty, and social agony. Worst of all, perhaps, it is afflicted with chronic and acute ahistoricism. America insist on ignoring the context of its present dilemmas. It insists on forgetting what preceded the headlines of today and on denying continuity with history. It insists, in short, on its exceptionalism. American Utopia and Social Engineering sets out to correct this amnesia. It misses no opportunity to flesh out both the historical premises and the political promises behind the social policies and political events of the period. These interdisciplinary concerns provide, in turn, the framework for the analyses of works of American literature that mirror their times and mores. Novels considered include: B.F. Skinner and Walden Two (1948), easily the most scandalous utopia of the century, if not of all times; Ken Kesey’s One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (1962), an anatomy of political disfranchisement American-style; Bernard Malamud’s God’s Grace (1982), a neo-Darwinian beast fable about morality in the thermonuclear age; Walker Percy’s The Thanatos Syndrome (1986), a diagnostic novel about engineering violence out of America’s streets and minds; and Philip Roth’s The Plot Against America (2004), an alternative history of homegrown ‘soft’ fascism. With the help of the five novels and the social models outlined therein, Swirski interrogates key aspects of sociobiology and behavioural psychology, voting and referenda procedures, morality and altruism, multilevel selection and proverbial wisdom, violence and chip-implant technology, and the adaptive role of emotions in our private and public lives.

Katherine Anne Porter, Flannery O’Connor, Cormac McCarthy, Walker Percy

The Last Catholic Novelist

A Novel

Beauty Will Save the World

Walker Percy and the Politics of the Wayfarer

The Last Self-Help Book

In 1962, Walker Percy (1916--1990) made a dramatic entrance onto the American literary scene when he won the National Book Award for fiction with his first novel, *The Moviegoer*. A physician, philosopher, and devout Catholic, Percy dedicated his life to understanding the mixed and somewhat contradictory foundations of American life as a situation faced by the wandering and won-dering human soul. His controversial works combined existential questioning, scientific investigation, the insight of the southern stoic, and authentic religious faith to produce a singular view of humanity's place in the cosmos that ranks among the best American political thinking. An authoritative guide to the political thought of this celebrated yet complex American author, **A Political Companion to Walker Percy** includes seminal essays by Ralph C. Wood, Richard Reinsch II, and James V. Schall, S.J., as well as new analyses of Percy's view of Thomistic realism and his reaction to the American pursuit of happiness. Editors Peter Augustine Lawler and Brian A. Smith have assembled scholars of diverse perspectives who provide a necessary lens for interpreting Percy's works. This comprehensive introduction to Percy's "American Thomism" is an indispensable resource for students of American literature, culture, and politics.

Winner of the 1996 Shamus Award for Best First PI Novel! There are seven of them. Children—innocents—whose long-buried remains are uncovered by a flash-flood. No one knows who could have committed such a crime. Clues are scarce, and with the media turning the story into a law enforcement nightmare, time is short. Only Wil Hardesty, a private eye who has more in common with the case than anyone knows, is willing to push hard enough—and dig deep enough—to find the cruelest of killers. The killer of The Innocents ... Praise for THE INNOCENTS ... "Author Richard Barre kicked off his Wil Hardesty series with this smart, psychologically nuanced first novel, which garnered a 1996 Shamus Award. The plot is gripping, the dialogue sharp, and the villains very villainous indeed, but the character of Wil Hardesty is what separates this mystery from the rest of the pack. More than just another private-eye-with-a-troubled-past, Hardesty is both complicated and flawed, a very real human who brings a lifetime's worth of pain, passion, and guilt to bear on solving this crime." —Publishers Weekly "Sober, understated, intense." —Kirkus Reviews "Up-close and personal narrative...nicely convoluted plot." —Library Journal "Crisp, street-smart dialogue; a likable protagonist; and very nasty villains...a solid debut." —Booklist "Impressive." —San Francisco Examiner "Excellent...the writing is so good." —The Oregonian "Walking in the shadows of everyone from Ross Macdonald to Lawrence Sanders, Barre still manages to find something original to say. The book's strength comes from the chances it takes...fresh characters...clever plot twists." —Chicago Tribune "Hardesty is remarkably evolved as a character in his first outing. [He] could be you or me or a neighbor, a person trying hard to survive a few of life's dirtier tricks. He has stature." —The Plain Dealer (Cleveland) "Barre delivers...an engrossing mystery that moves quickly in prose that is as sleek and muscular as its protagonist. This first outing easily handles, then transcends, the genre requisites for a lively, intense read. Reserve a long evening for this one...it delivers the tension and pace that readers demand." —Santa Barbara News Press "One of the best mysteries of the year." —Firsts Magazine "The Innocents is a truly powerful and moving novel, going beyond the private eye genre as only the best authors do. Let's hope that is only the first of a long and significant series." —Otto Penzler, Mysterious Press "Barre is a skilled writer, an uncanny observer and comes equipped with an uncommonly good ear for dialogue. Wil Hardesty, is a most welcome addition to the pantheon of private detectives." —Ross Thomas, author of *Out on the Rim* "A truly powerful and moving novel...an intriguing world of mystery, deceit and murder. Richard Barre is a skilled writer and *The Innocents* is a gripping story." —Michael Connelly, author of *The Fifth Witness* "A great read. Barre has a great command of all the elements—plot, character, and individual scenes. I suspect and hope that Wil Hardesty will be around crime fiction for many novels to come." —James Crumley, author of *Dancing Bear* "Will Hardesty is a man with a lot of pain and a lot of pride, a man with a mission: a man you should meet. In a world of fake and fabrication, *The Innocents* is the real thing." —Stephen Greenleaf, author of *False Conception* "The Innocents is a powerful novel...of action and suspense that is, in the end, a voyage of self-discovery." —Michael Collins, author of *Crimes and Misdemeanors*

In this groundbreaking study, Gary M. Ciuba examines how four of the South's most probing writers of twentieth-century fiction -- Katherine Anne Porter, Flannery O'Connor, Cormac McCarthy, and Walker Percy -- expose the roots of violence in southern culture. Ciuba draws on the paradigm of mimetic violence developed by cultural and literary critic René Girard, who maintains that individual human nature is shaped by the desire to imitate a model. Mimetic desire may lead in turn to rivalry, cruelty, and ultimately community-sanctioned -- and sometimes ritually sanctified -- victimization of those deemed outcasts. Ciuba offers an impressively broad intellectual discussion that gives universal cultural meaning to the southern experience of desire, violence, and divinity with which these four authors wrestled and out of which they wrote. In a comprehensive analysis of Porter's semiautobiographical *Miranda* stories, Ciuba focuses on the prescribed role of women that *Miranda* imitates and ultimately escapes. O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away* reveals three characters whose scandalous animosity caused by religious rivalry leads to the unbearable stumbling block of violence. McCarthy's protagonist in *Child of God*, Lester Ballard, appears as the culmination of a long tradition of the sacred violence of southern religion, twisted into his own bloody faith. And Percy's *The Thanatos Syndrome* brings Ciuba's discussion back to the victim, in Tom Moore's renunciation of a society in which scapegoating threatens to become the foundation of a new social regime. From nostalgia for the old order to visions of a utopian tomorrow, these authors have imagined the interrelationship of desire, antagonism, and religion throughout southern history. Ciuba's insights offer new ways of reading Porter, O'Connor, McCarthy, and Percy as well as their contemporaries who inhabited the same culture of violence -- violence desired, dreaded, denied, and deified.

BONUS: This edition contains an excerpt from Jonathan Kellerman's *Victims*. Perennial bestseller and acknowledged master of the psychological thriller, Jonathan Kellerman has created a riveting and memorable Alex Delaware novel about a troubled and elusive young woman whose brutal murder forces the brilliant psychologist-detective to confront his own fallibility. Lauren Teague is a beautiful, defiant, borderline-delinquent teenager when her parents bring her to Alex Delaware's office. But for all Alex's skill and effort, Lauren resists—angrily, provocatively. Reluctantly, the psychologist chalks Lauren up as one of the inevitable failures of a challenging profession. But years later, when Alex encounters Lauren as a stag party's featured entertainment, both doctor and patient are stucken with shame. And the ultimate horror takes place when, soon after, Lauren's brutalized corpse is found dumped in an alley. Alex disregards the advice of his trusted friend, LAPD detective Milo Sturgis, and jeopardizes his relationship with longtime lover, Robin Castagna, in order to pursue Lauren's murderer. As he investigates his young patient's troubled past, Alex enters the shadowy worlds of fringe psychological experimentation and the sex industry, and then into mortal danger when lust and big money collide in Southern California. Jonathan Kellerman's *L.A. is evil, seductive, and unforgiving, and Flesh and Blood* is mind-opening in its drama of a driven man's personal quest, breathtaking in its ingenious plot, filled with unforgettable characters, and topped off by a terrifying climax. This is suspense fiction at its finest.

An Analysis of Discourse in Walker Percy's *Love In The Ruins* and the Thanatos Syndrome

Love in the Ruins

Walker Percy

Books of Revelations

Honor, Melancholy, and Imagination in a Southern Family

The Innocents

"A study of the phenomenon of suicide, both actual and spiritual, in the major fictional works of Fyodor Dostoevsky and Walker Percy, drawing lines of continuity between the two authors and noting their differences. In the epilogue, counter-vision to the 'suicidal' ethos he has documented"--

This fascinating volume contains the memoirs of William Alexander Percy, who was born and raised in Mississippi and witnessed the social changes at the turn of the century. 'Lanterns on the Levee' is his memorial to the South with Mississippi Delta, during the time between the semi-feudal South of the 1800s and the uncertain South of the early 1940s. This is a book that will be of much value to anyone with an interest in the history and development of southern culture. It will not be missed by collectors of William Alexander Percy's important literature. William Alexander Percy (1885 - 1942) was a lawyer, planter, and poet from Greenville, Mississippi, most famous for writing this best-selling biography. We are proud to present this modern, affordable edition complete with a new preface by the author.

Culture, Not Politics We live in a politicized time. Culture wars and increasingly partisan conflicts have reduced public discourse to shouting matches between ideologues. But rather than merely bemoaning the vulgarity and sloganeering of the author and editor Gregory Wolfe, we should seek to enrich the language of civil discourse. And the best way to do that, Wolfe believes, is to draw nourishment from the deepest sources of culture: art and religious faith. Wolfe has brought to us the most powerful and persuasive voices of our generation," and this penetrating and wide-ranging book makes a powerful case for the importance of beauty and imagination to cultural renewal. He begins by tracing his own journey from a young cultural critic in the modern world to a career devoted to nurturing the creation of culture through contemporary literature and art that renew the Western tradition. Along the way, Wolfe finds in Renaissance Christian humanists like Erasmus and Thomas More that imagination and the arts are needed to offset the danger of ideological abstractions—a "distant mirror" in which to see our own times.

Hardy's study is concerned only with Percy's fiction, rather than his life, thought or his essays. He covers all six of Percy's novels from *The Moviegoer* (1961) to *The Thanatos Syndrome* (1987), and treats them only as fiction, rather than as or religious treatises. Hardy presents a close reading of each novel, focusing on the internal artistic consistency of the works in regard to their subgenres, adopted conventions, narrative focus, and reader/text interactions. He reveals the knowledgeable practitioner in control of his medium. ISBN 0-252-01387-5: \$24.95.

An Alex Delaware Novel

"Neither Angels Nor Beasts"

The Moviegoer

Walker Percy and the Moral Life of Medicine

Essays

A Political Companion to Walker Percy

A study of the theological principles and religious views that underlie Percy's writing--primarily his belief in the validity and efficacy of the Roman Catholic faith. Quinlan (English, U. of Alabama- Birmingham) traces events that molded the novelist's sensibility; presents close readings of The Moviegoer, The Last Gentleman, Love in the Ruins, and Thanatos Syndrome; and offers some new and controversial conclusions. Annotation copyright by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR

The Postmodern Syndrome

Walker Percy's Exploration of Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity : an Honors Thesis

Reassessing Walker Percy's, the Thanatos Syndrome

Lanterns on the Levee - Recollections of a Planter's Son

Lancelot

Flesh and Blood