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An Annotated Bibliography

by James Barlow Lloyd

This annotated bibliography of books and articles published about William Faulkner and his works between January, 1967, and the summer of 1970 supplements such existing secondary bibliographies as Maurice Beebe’s checklists in the Autumn 1956 and Spring 1967 issues of Modern Fiction Studies; Linton R. Massey’s William Faulkner: “Man Working,” 1919–1962: A Catalogue of the William Faulkner Collection of the University of Virginia (Charlottesville: Bibliographic Society of the University of Virginia, 1968); and O. B. Emerson’s unpublished doctoral dissertation, “William Faulkner’s Literary Reputation in America” (Vanderbilt University, 1962). The present bibliography begins where Beebe’s latest checklist leaves off, but no precise termination date can be established since publication dates for periodicals vary widely, and it has seemed more useful to cover all possible material than to set an arbitrary cutoff date.

The formal division into Bibliography, Biography, and Criticism, as well as many of the subdivisions in the Criticism section, follows the pattern established by James B. Meriwether’s critical bibliography, “William Faulkner,” in Fifteen Modern American Authors: A Survey of Research and Criticism (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1969), edited by Jackson R. Bryer. The approach, insofar as possible, is objective; and, since an attempt has been made to present the material as it stands without comment about its merit, the term annotation, usually used to describe the notes which are supplied for each study, is a misnomer; the notes are more like abstracts which condense each entry into several sentences. Thus, with limitations, the bibliography offers the reader a comprehensive checklist and some idea of the content of recent critical works on William Faulkner and his canon.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES


Published by eGrove, 1971
Faulkner Bibliography

Contains an extensive bibliography of Faulkner criticism but omits foreign articles, dissertations, and other materials. The checklist is divided into two sections: general studies and studies of individual works.


"William Faulkner" (pp. 175–210) by James B. Meriwether offers a critical survey of bibliographical, textual, biographical, and critical scholarship through 1968. The section on criticism, by far the largest, is divided, according to subject and scope, into General Estimates; Guides and Handbooks; Studies of Part of the Fiction; Sources, Influences, Intellectual Background; Style and Language; Religion and Philosophy; Race; and Studies of Individual Works.


"William Faulkner," by Tage Skou-Hansen, lists translations of Faulkner's works into Danish.


The selective annotated bibliography includes several articles about Faulkner's works.


This selective annotated bibliography includes several articles about Faulkner's works.


This selective annotated bibliography includes an article by Elmo Howell, "A Name for Faulkner's City."


A descriptive bibliography of the Faulkner material held by the University of Virginia divided into four parts: "Works by Faulkner," "Works about Faulkner," "Material Related to Faulkner," and "Faulkner Material Belonging to the Faulkner Estate and to the Faulkner Foundation." Contains no references to criticism more recent than the first part of 1965.

Reviews the initial criticism of Faulkner and Mitchell in such magazines as The Saturday Review of Literature, The New Republic, and The New Yorker. In each case Faulkner comes off second best.


Contains an annual review article by Robert W. Wiggins, “Faulkner” (pp. 86–95), which discusses the criticism, biographies, and bibliographies done on Faulkner in 1967, noting a shift in emphasis away from imagery studies in favor of the examination of sources.

BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES

Nostalgia


Relates Faulkner's debt to Phil Stone: early encouragement, patronage, criticism and help with the composition of the “Snopes saga.”

According to the Foreword, “Yoknapatawpha and the World of Murry Falkner,” by Lewis P. Simpson, “Murry Falkner’s memoir is important for these, among other, reasons: it is a basic source for the study of the life and writings of a major American writer, his brother, William Faulkner; and it is an imaginative repossession of significant facets of American life in the first half of the twentieth century.”


An excerpt from The Falkners of Mississippi.


Contains Mrs. Stone’s description of Faulkner seen, if not second hand, at least over her husband’s shoulder. Phil Stone is characterized as the talker, Faulkner as the listener.


Relates a student’s impression of an enigmatic Faulkner on a New York park bench.


Publishes a newly uncovered letter from Col. W. C. Faulkner to John F. Johnson, written in 1874, giving advice on railroad construction. The letter was found in the papers of Mrs. Dell Justice Crunk of Eupora, Mississippi.

Racial Attitudes


The writer quotes a letter from Faulkner to his former butler, Paul Pollard, in which he refuses to contribute money to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People because it works through coercion to accomplish an equality which should be accomplished by individual merit.


Cites the numerous times Faulkner tried to correct the impression made by what were taken to be racially biased statements recorded in an interview for the London Sunday Times (March 4, 1956) by Russell Howe.

Early Years


Offers a short synopsis of Faulkner’s relations with William Spratling, Sherwood Anderson, and Harold Levy in New Orleans and attempts a characterization by citing excerpts from early interviews.


Contributes a sequel to “William Faulkner Cadet” (University of Toronto Quarterly, XXXV, January, 1966) and contains supplementary facts about Faulkner’s RAF service.

Public Life


Applauds Faulkner’s Nobel Prize acceptance speech in “Faulkner at Stockholm” (pp. 163–67).


Reprints interviews with Faulkner concentrating on the 1930’s, nine entries, and the 1950’s, thirteen entries, including the interview with Jean Stein in 1956. The title is actually a warning, since it is taken from an article by Madeleine Chapsal which describes Faulkner’s defensiveness, sometimes hostility, toward interviewers.
CRITICAL STUDIES

General Estimates


Starts from two Faulkner quotations to the effect that life is motion and that an artist attempts to arrest that motion and tries to show how all techniques in the novels are aimed at the creation of “frozen moments,” images of arrested motion which carry the greatest possible emotional charge. Thus Faulkner was “trying to organize impressions of speed and energy in order to build the most intense possible concentrations of force, and then to confine them in the most tightly blocked situations.”


Defines a romantic poet as “one who creates symbols which reconcile extremes or struggle to do so.” Melville presents the reader with a challenge to create significant meanings out of himself, while Faulkner places innocents in a “decayed puritan world,” initiates them into awareness, and allows them to try to construct a “meaningful, just, and humane life out of the cultural elements.”


Puts the mythology in Faulkner’s works on three levels. The lowest and simplest level, “allusion and analogy,” is the casual use of classical myths for decorative purposes. In the second level, myth becomes integrated with plot, the degree of analogy is heightened, and the effect is functional, not decorative. The result is a novel like *Light in August*, where the pattern of the scapegoat, which includes Christ, is repeated. The third and most complicated level of myth is based on Ernst Cassirer’s *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1955).

Briefly, the idea is that some of the characters, like Rosa Coldfield, have a mythic cast of mind, one informed by impressions and intuition and admitting no distance between the object and the perceiver, resulting in a spiritual “principle which governs . . . reality unifying . . . sensory impressions.”

Contains an essay entitled "William Faulkner: Descent into the Vortex" (pp. 41–66) in which Miller maintains that Faulkner's method is to take some event in the present and trace it back to its roots.


Considers the novels and concludes that Faulkner is a typical American novelist because he deals with the following typical American themes: the problem of identity, the attractiveness of evil, and a world skepticism.


Discusses Faulkner's place in southern letters, his relation to the fugitive and agrarian critics, and to George Cable, Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Craddock, Joel Chandler Harris, and Thomas Nelson Page.


In "The Poetic Dialogues of William Faulkner" (pp. 175–96), Von Nostrand argues that the major novels—*The Sound and the Fury, Light in August,* and *Absalom, Absalom!*—and "The Bear" show characters in the process of defining themselves in terms of the myth of traditional humanistic society and in terms of divine retribution for the sin of slavery. Each protagonist is successful only insofar as he is able to put what he feels into words.

Guides and Handbooks


Aims at the beginning Faulkner student by offering a list of characters in and brief plot summaries of the novels and short stories.

Classifies the nomenclature of Yoknapatawpha County and discusses the cultural and symbolic significance of each name.

Studies of Part of the Fiction

General Studies


Takes exception to the critical theories that explain inconsistencies in the trilogy as literary quirks by calling the novels legendary, a term defined as partaking both of fiction and fact. The impression created by the novels is double. In one sense they are legend because Flem and Eula are enigmatic, distanced, yet the reader is introduced to some characters individually; the result is a sense of reality, fact. In legend, fiction is more important than fact; the reader sees Flem, for example, only through the unreliable eyes of various narrators. A “legendary novel” balances fact and fiction, purposely creating inconsistencies.


Examines Faulkner's changing attitude toward war in Soldier's Pay, Sartoris, The Unvanquished, and A Fable. In Soldier's Pay, Arthur finds Faulkner writing typical “Lost Generation” material, the theme being the soldier's alienation from homefront society. The short stories of the same period display more complexity in that the physical symbol of isolation, the wound, is purely mental (“Victory”). Sartoris presents the legend of the Old South, typified by Col. W. C. Falkner, and its relation to the present. The Unvanquished comments on the relationship of the past to the present by implying that some of the past must be rejected in order to preserve individuality and integrity. In A Fable Faulkner makes an over-explicit statement of his ethical belief that it is man's responsibility to examine his codes and replace the abstract with the human.


Points out the sources and functions of classical verse and songs, mostly epic poetry and Negro hymns.

Traces Faulkner’s “language, form, and imaginative perception of experience” from the early work through *The Sound and the Fury*, the form of which is described as a “flowing circle” because “each experience illuminates another, evokes another in a flowing, though intertwining, order.”


Discusses the Christian symbolism and irony of the church, the bells, the spire, and the steeple in *Light in August* and *The Sound and the Fury*, saying that Faulkner achieves irony by the disparity between the stock meaning of the symbols and the actual situation in which he presents them.


An analysis of the structure in relation to the content of the works. “The thesis is that the form of these three novels . . . comes from the life of a character who is not the protagonist of the novel”:

Quentin Compson, for instance, in *Absalom, Absalom!*


Examines clairvoyance in *Light in August*, *As I Lay Dying*, and *Absalom, Absalom!*, finding that preternatural powers, as Faulkner describes them in some characters (Cash and Darl Bundren), seem to approximate his definition of the creative act and may be used for either good or evil.


The four novels which precede *The Sound and the Fury—Soldier’s Pay*, *Elmer* (unpublished), *Mosquitoes*, and *Sartoris*—show a growth in Faulkner’s “poetic,” which is defined as applying to both form and impulse (“what a novel should be and do”), thus making the later work possible. Faulkner’s was a “poetic” of par-
ticularization "which implied that whatever universality a work might attain would be reached through a willingness to focus on the weaknesses of flawed humanity and through a care with de-
tails." In The Sound and the Fury then, the characters, author,
and reader try fruitlessly to recover an indefinable Caddy Compson.


Tries to dissect Soldier's Pay, Sartoris, The Sound and the Fury, As I Lay Dying, and Light in August in terms of moral order and disorder.


Concentrates on the short stories and compares the settings to a child-like world of half fantasy, half reality. Discusses Faulkner's humor, both light and dark, his pessimism and optimism, and the society-family-individual relationship.


Divides Faulkner's humor into such categories as inversion, over-
statement, understatement, dialect, and juxtaposition of opposites.


Consists of an introductory essay explaining Faulkner's use of classical allusions and myths, noting his tendency to use them ironically, and a series of three indexes which catalogue all classical allusions and quotations, explicate them, and list sources of critical comment.

Character Studies


Sees Joe Christmas, Popeye, and, in part, Nancy Mannigoe as sociopaths, a term defined as applying to any individual who acts on suppositions that are not consciously remembered, and who usually feels no guilt or any other emotion. In Faulkner's work "the psychologically twisted but morally innocent are the victims of
the psychologically normal but morally corrupt.” Roughly equivalent to the crucifixion of Christ, this pattern is continuous and irrevocable. “The innocent must suffer for the guilty because the guilty are incapable of suffering efficaciously for themselves.”


Both Faulkner and Joyce were working inside their respective traditions. Faulkner presents Protestant characters who attempt to remodel tradition to give their own experiences meaning, and Joyce operates the same way within the Catholic tradition.


Divides Faulkner’s heroes into “active individualists,” like Thomas Sutpen, “passive cripples,” like Joe Christmas, and “guilt-ridden moralists,” like Isaac McCaslin. The action of all heroes is ineffective in a nihilistic world where freedom is the only choice.


Groups the sinners into three categories, beginning with those least conscious of sinning and progressing to those with acute moral consciousness. The sins are inordinate appetite, either for sex, respectability, or religion; moral rigidity, characterized by an obsession with moralistic absolutes; and a desire to “make life into art... the result is death-in-life.”


Says Faulkner’s most enduring characters are his primitives: idiots, poor-whites, and Negroes.


Compares the fallen women in Faulkner’s work to similar characters in the works of Crane, Norris, Garland, Dreiser, O’Hara, Hemingway, and Dos Passos. Garson believes that Faulkner shows woman in the worst possible condition but that he is the only one
who offers a hopeful alternative, since "by admitting guilt and saying 'no' to further iniquity the fallen woman may be redeemed."


Picks out dominant patterns of character behavior in the novels, saying that all live by some sort of aggressive code—economic, social, or religious—or, if weak, withdraw in defensive patterns or retreat into the past.


For Faulkner's characters time is not sequential but psychologi-
cal, and Faulkner solves the problem of logical progression by using modifications of the stream of consciousness technique.

Jackson, Naomi. "Faulkner's Woman: 'Demon-Nun and Angel-

Takes exception to Leslie Fiedler's view of Faulkner as woman-
hater in *Love and Death in the American Novel* (New York: Cri-
terion Books, 1960) by saying that many of the female characters are inspired by a poetic devotion to a sort of mythological bitch-
goddess.


Defends Gavin Stevens by arguing that he is sympathetically in-
volved with the other characters and that he becomes "more than just a 'voice' in the struggle against Snopesism."

Leonard, Karen K. B. "The Negro in the Fiction of William Faulk-

Surveys the critical opinion about Faulkner's Negroes and asserts that they are usually historically and artistically correct, that they are used for comic relief or as a background to illuminate prevailing white opinion and that they are individuals not types.


Isolates Faulkner's sensitive, intelligent characters in the belief that the understanding of each individual character will be in-
formed by group consideration. Mascitelli finds a change in characterization from the "Prufrockian" inadequacy of Talliferro in Mosquitoes to the sympathetic intelligence of Gavin Stevens in The Town. This argument tends to de-emphasize the importance of the concept of "primitivism," since Faulkner was increasingly sympathetic to his sensitive characters.


Divides Faulkner's female characters into two groups, bad ones—"Young Bitches," "Perverted Mother Figures," and "Victimized Spinsters"—and good ones—"Grand Old Ladies," "Earth Mothers," and "Social Outcasts." The former reject their natural functions, while the latter most clearly illustrate the "eternal verities of the heart."


Classifies Faulkner's women as earthmothers (Eula) and ghosts (Rosa Coldfield) using their fertility as a guide and says that the attitude of the novels indicates that sex, even though it sometimes causes "carnage," is responsible for man's endurance.

O'Brien, Matthew C. "A Note on Faulkner's Civil War Women." Notes on Mississippi Writers, I (Fall, 1968), 56–68.

Analyzes the actions of Judith Sutpen, Rosa Coldfield, and Clytie in Absalom, Absalom!, Rosa Millard and Drusilla Hawk in The Unvanquished, and other of Faulkner's women to discover his attitude toward their performance in the Civil War, which O'Brien finds to be ambiguous, since the characters are, as a rule, treated sympathetically, but are censured for their blindness to the true nature of war and for their myopic adherence to traditional values.


Describes Flem Snopes as a modern automaton, more a cash register than a man. He functions in the trilogy as the culmination of an economic tradition in contrast to Ratliff, the humanist.

The first part of this two-part dissertation deals with the Snopes Trilogy as a "modern morality play" in which Flem Snopes is the embodiment of evil, and discusses the techniques Faulkner uses to achieve this characterization. Part two argues that Ratliff, not Gavin Stevens, is Faulkner's spokesman and analyzes Stevens' increasing awareness of his inaction.


Places Faulkner's characters according to their attitudes toward time. Some, like Quentin and Mr. Compson, can see time only linearly, mechanically, which makes the past irrevocably lost and the future an illusion. A few, like Dilsey, are atuned to natural time's cyclical pattern.


Approaches the problem of Benjy Compton and Joe Christmas' similarity to Christ by asking the question, "in terms of their function in the respective novels, in what way is the Christlikeness of Ben and Joe understandable?" Powers concludes that the two characters function like Pearl in *The Scarlet Letter* and like Christ because all represent, are brought into existence by, man's sin. Their acceptance or rejection, then, becomes the criterion on which salvation is based.


Compares Faulkner's treatment of alienated characters to that
of the other authors and suggests that all would agree that “man can only end his isolation and loneliness by forgetting self and giving precedence to the love of his fellows.”


Analyzes the patterns in Faulkner’s treatment of “primitives” by dividing them into psychic primitives (children and idiots who are mentally restricted), chronological primitives (hunters and Indians who wish to return to an idealized past) and cultural primitives (poor whites and Negroes who wish to escape from a sophisticated society), and finds that all are committed to ideals embodied by community traditions and sometimes underlined by rituals.


Postulates that there is evidence in Faulkner’s work of a “search for a strong protagonist,” one possessing the qualities of intelligence, gentility, idealism, and morality. Horace Benbow, the prototype for this character, is abandoned in favor of Gavin Stevens, who starts out as a mere spokesman for the author but becomes increasingly complex and involved and finally learns to accept and react to essential reality in *The Mansion*. “Gavin’s development as a character mirrors the development of the author himself.”


Finds the central theme of the Snopes Trilogy to be the opposition of morality, represented by Gavin Stevens, Ratliff, and Charles Mallison, and amorality, personified by Flem Snopes. In the battle Flem is destined to eventual failure and community revenge by Mink and Linda Snopes. Morality, while doomed to partial failure, is a life giving force; amorality is self-defeating.

**Style and Language**


Discusses Faulkner’s mastery of language under the headings: “pronunciation, names, diction, morphology, figurative language,
syntax, titles of his books and short stories, and proverbial expressions.” Boswell finds, for example, that characters’ nicknames may derive either from their first names or from their “appearance, nature, or activities.”


Points out that the traditional rules of rhetoric governing syntax and dialect do not apply to some of Faulkner’s works, especially Light in August. Lena Grove, for instance, speaks in one dialect and thinks in two others, and the same modifiers are consistently used to describe individual characters.

Gregg, Alvin L. “Style and Dialect in Light in August and Other Works by William Faulkner.” DA, XXX (January, 1970), 3009A (University of Texas).

Defines style as a “characteristic manner” and variants, divides Faulkner’s individual style into substyles, considering chronological progression and southern influences, and examines eight levels of dialectal styles in Light in August.


Faulkner often assigns thoughts to characters which, given their limited insight and sensitivity, they should not be able to express (Lena Grove, for example). Implicit in this technique is the assertion “that the simplest character, at some time in his life, does possess an insightful sensitivity to the beauty and pain of existence.”


Divides the linguistic structures in the first three sections of The Sound and the Fury into six formal categories—clauses, appended groups, transitional signals, rhetorical parallelism or repetition, absolute repetition, and unusual lexical sequences—to determine if there is a meaningful artistic pattern in the language. Defining style as the deviation from a norm, Kaluza shows that the language in all three sections is different and that the language in all sections differs from objective prose. Benjy’s section has only the barest essentials of language; Quentin’s contains more appended groups.
and is organized according to rhetorical principles; Jason's is the only section that resembles common speech. The sentence structure of the three sections is distinctive from regular structure because of the habitually loose relations between syntactic units. Faulkner forces reader involvement precisely because of the loose structure, since the reader must almost co-author the novel by relating the units himself.


Contains an essay by Michael Millgate, "William Faulkner: The Problem of Point of View" (pp. 181–92), which starts with The Sound and the Fury and analyzes the nature of Faulkner's experiments with point of view. The progression, as Millgate sees it, is from an uninterrupted interior monologue, which forces the reader to judge for himself, to an interrupted interior monologue (like Absalom, Absalom!) which allows the audience to set the context, does away with implied abstract standards, and brings the material closer to reality, performing some of the functions forced on the reader in the earlier works. In The Town the technique is more refined, less obtrusive.


Since "extreme engagement, emotion, realization, awareness or action surpasses words, makes them unnecessary and perhaps impossible as well," Faulkner had to overcome a language barrier to communicate non-verbal truth.


Uses Light in August and Absalom, Absalom! to illustrate the kinds of coincidences—structural, contributing, philosophical, and mundane—and the artist's problem of verisimilitude.


Shows the subtlety and sensitivity of Faulkner's early southern syntax.


Examines the technique of the unpublished and unfinished type-
script of *Elmer*, pointing out that in most revisions Faulkner was attempting chronological rearrangement of the narrative as opposed to *Soldier's Pay* in which he used simple flashbacks. Oldenburg sees an early impressionist influence in *New Orleans Sketches*, which is replaced by the influence of the novel of ideas by the time of *Mosquitoes*.

Schultz, William J. "Motion in Yoknapatawpha County: Theme and Point of View in the Novels of William Faulkner." *DA*, XXIX (1969), 3154A (Kansas State University).

Argues that if life is motion the author's main problem is to make the reader feel that motion, which he does through point of view; hence Faulkner's stream-of-consciousness technique, which in the early work is subjective but later comes to impart something of communal motion.


Applies "five versions of pastoral presentation" gleaned from William Empson's *Some Versions of Pastoral* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1935), to Faulkner's short stories. The argument is that the variety of styles is not a weakness because it "demands of the reader, practically with every story, a new approach to understanding."


Attempts to "see the Faulkner canon as a collection of artistic assaults on a series of separate and yet finally related aesthetic problems." That is, since life is motion and art must necessarily suspend that motion, the artist is bound to fail. The "artist-surrogates" give Faulkner a chance to analyze this problem in the failure of each character's attempt to "make life adhere to a preconceived pattern."


Contrasts the manuscript and printed versions of some Faulkner novels, categorizes the revisions into four kinds—expansion, contraction, substitution, and reorganization—and finds that, while all are common, expansion is more prevalent. Winn's judgment is that in almost every case the revisions were improvements, either stylistically or thematically.
Philosophy and Religion


Examines the contexts in which the words *doom, terrific*, and *terrible* are found in Faulkner's works to discover their particular meanings. The conclusions are that *doom* is akin to destiny, that *terrific* implies immense tension, usually against natural forces, and that *terrible* is used to describe the motion finally achieved.


The ontological implications of Faulkner's endurance theme are the subject of this dissertation, which outlines two ways of looking at "pride" and "humility," as a modern—aggressively and impiously—or traditionally—submissively and mythically—and identifies Faulkner with the latter. The body of the study presents readings of *Go Down, Moses, The Unvanquished, Intruder in the Dust, The Reivers*, and *Absalom, Absalom!* to illustrate the endurance-nonendurance theme.


Takes Faulkner's comments on Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* and applies them to the Mississippi work, assuming that anything an author says about someone else's books is more true about his own. Bradford's conclusion is that Faulkner subjected Hemingway's book to review because he saw in it something of the peace brought about by a balance of pride and humility that is present in his own work.


to Discourse (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966) failed to take into account the "lucid humanism" which they had ascribed to Faulkner.


Defines Faulkner’s attitude toward the land by saying that in his work land is the basis of dynasty, is a record of human achievement, is a symbol of a covenant with man, and is linked with the pagan forces of "fertility, sexuality, and fatality."


Finds fault with "Shingles for the Lord" because it "reflects not only the poverty of his later manner—it was published in 1943—but certain limitations which were inherent from the beginning."

Howell feels that since Faulkner disliked and had little to do with organized religion, he was not able to view the Church correctly, especially the country Church, and most especially the Baptist country Church.


Claims Faulkner’s work is an affirmation of faith, not a negation, because of the vitality of some characters who are able to endure, like Jenny DePre, and treats Absalom, Absalom! as a chronicle of southern history.


Says that Faulkner’s near-sighted view of organized religion kept him from showing the proper influence of Southern Protestant Christianity.


Divides the characters in As I Lay Dying according to three basic philosophical positions—idealism, nominalism, and realism—in order to make Faulkner’s philosophical attitudes more understandable. Nominalism, Addie’s emphasis on material things, is contrasted with idealism, Darl’s emphasis on concepts, but the best position is Cash’s realism, which enables him to strike a balance, to endure.

"After the Lost Generation" (pp. 161–98), chapter five of the book, contrasts Hemingway's and Faulkner's attitudes toward alienated man. According to Noble, Faulkner moved from the belief that isolation is a necessary retreat from an evil society to the belief that the alienated man, since he is unable to accept love, creates evil.


Finds emphasis on three virtues in Faulkner's novels which justify applying the term "Christian" to him. "They are: the cognitive virtue of grasping reality as it is, the acceptance of man as a body-spirit composite, and finally, humility." Thus, Hightower in *Light in August* is forced into self-recognition by the reality of Lena Grove, Byron Bunch, and Joe Christmas; Wilbourne in *The Wild Palms* understands that his love for Charlotte Rittenmeyer, "which required both body and spirit to be initiated, demands both body and spirit to continue to be." Humility is self-evident.


Contains an essay on Faulkner by Thomas Merton, "'Baptism in the Forest': Wisdom and Imitation in William Faulkner" (pp. 17–44), which describes the "sapiential myths" in "The Bear" and *The Wild Palms*, sapiential being defined from Greek as a knowledge above and encompassing *scientia* and *intellectus*. The thesis is that the monastic rejections in both works are not affirmative but do admit the possibility of an affirmation.


Agrees with Walter J. Slatoff's *Quest for Failure: A Study of William Faulkner* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1960) that Faulkner viewed experience in terms of antithetical forces, but sees a dialectic progression in the work toward a resolution of tension in favor of faith. The creative forces, "the wilderness father, mother love, and social morality," finally triumph over the destructive forces, "patriarchal inflexibility, sexual irresponsibility, and
Snopesism," in *A Fable* and *The Mansion* because the corporal and Mink Snopes prevail.


Examines Faulkner's philosophy and finds it wanting because, while showing the alienation of modern man, he offers no solution. Weatherby, H. L. "Sutpen's Garden." *Georgia Review*, XXI (Fall, 1967), 354–69.

Contrasts Faulkner's, Hemingway's, and Dante's views of Eden. Dante sits squarely in the center of the Christian Garden, Heming way has reached a cold detachment by repudiation, and Faulkner, groping backward toward Dante, is caught in the middle.

Sources


Cites a possible source for the name Sartoris in a play of the 1920's called *Two Little Girls in Blue*.


Relates reviews of Joseph Hergesheimer's *The Bright Shawl* and *Linda Condon*, written by Faulkner for *The Mississippian* in 1922, to the first of Faulkner's own novels, Mosquitoes. In his reviews Faulkner admired Hergesheimer's technique of "induction," description without naming, which is much the same as what he, himself, did in Mosquitoes by avoiding the mention of mosquitoes except in the title. *Linda Condon* is the story of the relationship between a sculptor and a young girl whom he associates with an ideal, as Gordon does in Mosquitoes.


Uses both external and internal evidence to explain the enigmatic title of one of Faulkner's posthumously published pieces, "Weekend Revisited," which appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, October 9, 1965. The allusion, according to Gresset, is to Charles R. Jackson's popular post-war novel, *The Lost Weekend*. Both
pieces are about alcoholics in New York at a time of personal crisis, and Faulkner's protagonist is some twenty years older, hence, revisited. But the works are controlled by different purposes. Jackson's is a phychological novel about an alcoholic in action, while Faulkner's is a philosophical story about a man who drinks to escape anguish but who, when confronted with a choice between sorrow and nothing, chooses sorrow.


Comparès the use of dogs in the downfall of an imperious Par­sian lady and Senator Clarence Snopes. "The tall tale as it is found in Rabelais accords closely with Faulkner's practice of it, and ... the comico-satirical function in particular is substantially similar."


Finds a possible source for The Sound and the Fury in the long poem "Tamar", by Robinson Jeffers which contains, among other things, an incestuous love affair, an idiot with a time-defying memory, an allusion to Macbeth, and a heroine whose name means "palm tree."


Suggests that Faulkner took several of his chapter titles in The Unvanquished from Balzac's Les Chovans.


Cites close parallels in setting, plot, and characterization between Faulkner's A Fable and a book that he owned, Humphrey Cobb's Paths of Glory.


Finds many parallels between Faulkner's speech and Joseph
Conrad's "Henry James: An Appreciation," an article which appeared in the *North American Review* (CLXXX, January, 1905, 102–8) and was reprinted in *Notes on Life and Letters* (pp. 11–19), because both express optimistic faith in "love, pity, pride, compassion, and sacrifice."


Sees a kinship between the image of Emily as an idol in the window and Poe's Helen in the same posture.


Suggests that the reader interested in Faulkner's use of the Bible would do well to consider the Apocrypha, since parallels to Jason's name, character, and the plot of *The Sound and the Fury* can be found in *II Maccabees* and Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, both of which Faulkner owned.

Influence


Says both Dickens and Faulkner reduce the psyche to ruling passions, sacrificing verisimilitude for force. In this manner they are able to illustrate mutually exclusive passions, the conflict between society and the individual, and the urge to become autonomous.


Examines Faulkner's early poetry in *The Marble Faun* and *A Green Bough* in two ways. First Brooks traces the influence of Swinburne and A. E. Housman, showing how echoes of both often combine to create a rather literary setting, one which bears no relation to Mississippi; then he compares the images, their use and setting, in the poems with those in *The Hamlet* and finds that many images recur but invariably are more complex, more well set up, more real, and more in keeping with a "poetry which will everywhere acknowledge the unpoetic, the realistic, and even the ugly, and absorb and digest them into itself."

Argues that Aubrey Beardsley, member of the Decadent Movement, influenced Faulkner—the artistic style is described as elaborate, stark, flat, and ruthless in black and white—and draws many parallels between painting and writing.


Compares Wessex to Yoknapatawpha because both are "beset by change" and have parallel themes and characters.


Attempts to show similarity in ideas, incidents, images, use of language, and words between The Sound and the Fury and The Waste Land by printing excerpts from each side by side. The idea is to illustrate "how certain key words might have set off Faulkner's own creative impulses."


Cites similarities in the techniques of Faulkner and Poe in “William Faulkner and the Art of the Detective Story” (pp. 55–62). Absalom, Absalom! and “Murders in the Rue Morgue” both relate public knowledge of the events, then reconstruct them in the mind of an analyst. French states that Faulkner’s two greatest novels, Absalom, Absalom! and The Sound and the Fury, have the same theme. “The perception that drove him through his greatest creative period is the timeworn adage about pride preceding a fall.”


Compares themes in “The Bear” to Keats' ideal of art in “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” using allusions to Keats’ poem in “The Bear” as evidence of the desirability of such a study. Keats' vision of Art as an unchanging platonic ideal is seen as analogous to what has been called Faulkner’s “frozen movement,” which means that if life is motion, the artist creates Art by arresting that motion, by making the ideal out of the actual. This is what Faulkner does in “The Bear” by presenting the characters as if they were in relief in a
Discusses Capo, lay.


 Discusses the similarities between Faulkner’s and Dickens’ cynical view of history, use of children, use of Gothic elements, and naming practices and says that they both were deeply rooted in locale, distrusted codes and formal religion, and held human values supreme.


 Describes a connection between Faulkner and Sir Walter Scott based on several comments at the University of Virginia to the effect that the South’s relationship to the North resembles that of Scotland to England. A quotation from Scott’s *The Talisman*, which resembles a passage in *The Hamlet*, is also offered as evidence.


 Begins to analyze the influence of contemporary drama on Faulkner’s work by citing biographical facts that allow for possible acquaintance, namely, the association with Stark Young in New York in 1920–21 which is used as a bridge to the Provincetown Theater, including Eugene O’Neill, J. M. Synge, and Edna St. Vincent Millay. Using both internal and external evidence, Kibler suggests that Millay’s play, *Aria da Capo*, is a possible source for Faulkner’s unpublished *Marionettes: A Play in One Act*.


 Theodor Wolpers article, “Formen mythisierenden Erzählens in der modernen Prosa: Joseph Conrad im Vergleich mit Joyce, Lawrence und Faulkner” (397–422), cites the influence of Conrad on Faulkner’s syntax, especially sentence construction, repetition, and contrast.


 Applies Fielding’s dictum that a novel is a “comic epic poem in
prose” to Faulkner’s trilogy in order to show its epic qualities. The thesis is that Faulkner adapted Fielding’s principles to his own time by using a locally created myth, the practices of romantic poetry, and the contemporary comedy of the absurd.


Explores the influence of Wilde and Swinburne in Faulkner’s poetry, especially in the character of the femme fatale.


Traces the Decadent influence of the French Symbolists in Soldiers’ Pay by citing “decadent” symbols—the faun, the worm, and the tower—which Faulkner employs but uses in his own way. For instance, he attacks organized religion in the form of the tower (spire), but recognizes the need for some kind of belief; hence the towers lean but do not fall.


After acknowledging the need for further study of Faulkner’s debt to Walter Scott, Showett proceeds to show how Bruce Harkness’ citation of that influence is tenuous (Mississippi Quarterly, XX, Summer, 1967). The similarity between a passage in The Ttailsman and one in The Hamlet does not necessarily mean that Faulkner studied Scott, since L. Q. C. Lamar quoted the passage from The Ttailsman in a speech probably familiar to Col. Faulkner and reprinted in a biography of Lamar by Edward Mayes, former chancellor of the University of Mississippi.

Intellectual Background

*Faulkner and the South*


In the fourth chapter of this book (“The Decay of Yoknapatawpha County,” pp. 75–109), Blake attempts to discover socio-historical facts about the real South in Faulkner’s Mississippi works. The thesis is that since “imagination never works in a vacuum,” all fictional efforts are laced with facts.

Applies Mircea Eliade's theory of civilization to Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County. Man, according to Eliade, constructs a new world when he settles a new area. The community is the cosmos, in Faulkner's case symbolized by the courthouse, which is surrounded by chaos, the wilderness. The point of _Absalom, Absalom!_ and _Requiem for a Nun_, Crane feels, is "that the success of a civilization is directly proportional to the ideals and beliefs which motivate its founders."


Suggests that Faulkner departed from "Cavalier" tradition by arguing "that the South could not ignore the burdens of its history for the illusions of tradition." In so doing he cleared the way for such writers as Robert Penn Warren and C. Van Woodward who led the South away from "McCarthyism."


Directly quotes long passages on the mule from Faulkner's work and equates the mule with an agrarian life now rapidly being replaced by "gadgetry."


Views the short story "Wash," later incorporated into _Absalom, Absalom!_ as an indictment of the aristocracy because of Sutpen's moral failure, as a sympathetic treatment of the southern poor white class, and most of all as an example of the complex social relationships in Yoknapatawpha.


Asserts that the trilogy reflects a breakdown of Faulkner's belief in the old southern ideals, resulting in Mink's final heroic escape.


Shows how Faulkner's attitude toward the Indians changes from a terrified, fascinated realism in "Red Leaves" (1930) and "A
Justice” (1931) to humor in “Lo” (1934) and finally to idealism in “A Courtship” (1948).


... says that the mule, like the Negro in Faulkner’s fiction, is a symbol of the post-war South, hardheaded, humble, proud, and solitary.


Discusses the techniques Faulkner used to achieve universality in his work. The conclusion is that an artist sublimates “the actual into the apochryphal” (Faulkner’s words), choosing particular characteristics, which are universally particular, by a process of selection determined by the needs of the story; thus the vision is not made to conform to actuality, which is unpattered, but to some sort of logical pattern, a better world.


... traces the conflicting “genteel” and “vernacular” values in southern literary history through Mark Twain and ends with Faulkner’s Sartoris, The Unvanquished, Go Down, Moses, Intruder in the Dust, Light in August, and the Snopes Trilogy. Kerlin then takes issue with such critics as Walter Slatoff and Warren Beck who, he says, confuse Faulkner’s presentation of traditional “genteel” values with direct authorial statement, when, in fact, the “vernacular” element (Ratliff, Byron Bunch) in the fiction is often triumphant and “genteel” characters are usually inactive, negative.


... presents the history and topography of Lafayette County and Oxford as they relate to Faulkner’s Mississippi work and provides a study of the raw material from which the artist drew, an attempt to examine the creative process by comparing art to reality. Faulkner is compared to Balzac and Zola in his creation of a fictional
community; but, while they wrote with overall plans in mind, Kerr says that Faulkner was more concerned with creating real people and that his art was spontaneous, hence the many factual discrepancies in the books. As for the identification of Oxford with Jefferson, Kerr believes that, while there are many similarities, Jefferson is purposely more typical than Oxford and, for this reason, more universal.


Compares Young’s and Faulkner’s attitudes toward the aristocracy, the family, land, and the Negro to show how they reacted differently to the same southern social stimuli.


Contrasts Faulkner’s treatment of the Civil War with that of earlier more romantic writers, finding that he tends to dwell on moral destruction while they accentuated material deprivation. O’Brien says that Thomas Sutpen is Faulkner’s archetype of antebellum society, a society marred by the tragic flaw of slavery, which engendered the habit of treating people like things.


Relates to Faulkner’s “use of the past as a comment on Man’s depravity and the possibility of moral choice.” In Absalom, Absalom! Faulkner establishes history as myth, an imaginative creation involving the narrator, thus achieving universality. “The Bear” and The Unvanquished show thematic departure from earlier historic determinism (Sartoris) because Isaac McCaslin and Old Bayard are able to repudiate their heritage. In Requiem for a Nun history is not an integral part of the plot; instead, it is a norm of moral depravity against which the action is set.


Sees the Mississippi work as a conflict between an aristocratic view (Sartoris) and a democratic view (Sutpen) of the best southern leaders. The underlying question is can “traditional rulers lead the South through present difficulties and into a viable future?”

Disagrees with Elmo Howell about the function of the essay on the mule in *Sartois*. Howell had called it a eulogy to the past (*Southern Folklore Quarterly*, XXV, June 1961), but Stafford sees it as performing the same function as the episode at the MacCallum's, namely, as a foil to Bayard's romantic posturing, and backs up his argument by pointing out that in *The Reivers* mules are identified with Uncle Parsham in an idyllic scene.


Discusses the myth of the Old South—plantation life, war, reconstruction—and its moral implications in *Sanctuary* and *The Sound and the Fury*. Judge Drake is "the old South corrupted as Benbow is the Old South morally bankrupt."


Claims that Faulkner's southern point of view caused him to draw only caricatures (Brownlee, Sickymo, Fonsiba) of freedmen in *Go Down, Moses*, the only strong ones being half-breeds, thus making Isaac's resolutions "only rhetoric" because Faulkner does not really understand.

**Faulkner and the Frontier**


Compares *The Hamlet* with Harris' *Sut Lovingood's Yarns* to detect usage of southwestern humor in Faulkner.

Boswell, George W. "Folkways in Faulkner." *Mississippi Folklore Register*, I (Fall, 1967), 83–90.

Divides the folkways in Faulkner into four categories—linguistics, literature, action, and science—citing examples for each. Old man Falls' homemade remedy for wens in *Sartois*, for example, is an instance of scientific folklore.

Asserts Faulkner's debt to the oral tradition in literature by showing the use of the following stock oral devices: incorporating a long semi-independent story directly into a novel, using a *skaz* (tale told by a fictional character), using humorous exaggeration, and celebrating the genre itself in stories like "The Old People."


Divides Faulkner's folklore into eight categories—beliefs about agriculture and fertility, hunting rituals, animals, buried treasure, folk speech, superstition, the trickster, and the tall tale; cites examples of each; and analyzes the function of the folklore, finding that Faulkner uses it to provide authenticity in his backwoods setting, for characterization, and for humor.


Claims Jefferson was named for the symbol of independence and self-reliance, Thomas Jefferson.


Places Faulkner in the southwestern school of humorists because of his use of the tall tale, farce, and other traditional "masculine" genres, but also recognizes his kinship with Charles Dickens, the observer of "minute details of human relations." The attitude toward what comedy is and how Faulkner's art conforms to type is colored throughout by Bergson's essay on laughter.


Argues that part of Faulkner's technique is the "conscious recreation" of the story teller-listener situation, as in the frontier tradition of yarns, anecdotes, and tall tales. Even "many stories and motifs of Faulkner which can not be identified as part of the folk culture have nevertheless been created so that they follow the characteristic patterns of oral folktale."

Asserts that the humor of Mark Twain and Faulkner involves certain assumptions about history and humanity. Using mainly *The Hamlet* and *Huckleberry Finn*, Vorpahl examines the failure of the myth of the frontier when confronted with human reality as seen by the comic personality (Huck Finn) or in terms of the comic predicament (*The Hamlet*).

**Studies of Individual Works**

**Short Stories**


Uses Miss Jenny De Pre as the measurement of Faulkner’s good women. “Quality” to her embodies the same things that “stewardship of the land” does for men. She, Bradford says, is the best example of the woman’s role in society, seeing to the endurance of the race.


Asks for more detailed examinations of Faulkner’s short fiction and supplies an analysis of “Elly,” which is called a “portrait etched in acid” because it is an unemotional description of a flapper whose rebellion against her natural place in society causes chaos. Unlike most of Faulkner’s evil characters, Elly is never presented sympathetically, never given any human touches. She is shallow, self-pitying, modern, and in open revolt against the traditional values represented by her grandmother.


Calls “Mistral” a study in human tempering because the protagonists of the story, the narrator and his friend, are changed by their experiences in an Italian mountain village; they are exposed to evil in the person of a lecherous, hypocritical, murderous priest who is punished for his “unnatural” behavior; and vicariously they experience something akin to Hawthorne’s “fortunate fall,” in that they become aware of evil at first hand.

Disagrees with Elmo Howell's assertion that "Barn Burning" is the story of Ab Snopes's triumph over the de Spains ("Colonel Sartoris Snopes and Faulkner's Aristocrats," The Carolina Quarterly, XI, Summer, 1959, 13-19). Both agree that the story line can be made to conform to the Snopes vs. Sartoris theme, but Franklin argues that "Barn Burning" is the story of a boy's coming of age, which means the beginning of moral decisions, hence the possible choice between morality and amorality.


Maintains that Caddy is the most important character in "That Evening Sun" because she is the only one who is not afraid to recognize Nancy as a human being. The others, Mr. Stoval, Mr. and Mrs. Compson, Quentin, and Jason, consider Nancy to be "something less than themselves, something to be used."


Asserts that the courtship in the title refers to the platonic relationship between Ikkemotubbe and David Hogganbeck, not to the courtship of Herman Baskat's sister.


Says that "A Justice" is a story of initiation like Hemingway's Nick Adams series.


Holds that the central theme of all the stories in Knight's Gambit is the community's reaction to an outsider, either a local, isolated resident (Monk) or a stranger (Gauldres). Gavin Stevens' importance is minimized.


Places all the events between 1864 and 1938.


Claims justice demands that Res Grier pay for the sin of pride by not being allowed to help rebuild the church in "Shingles for the Lord."

Argues that all biblical references in “That Evening Sun” are to be taken ironically and that the fire imagery applied to Nancy intensifies in order to dramatize her descent into the hell of “Faulkner’s degenerate South.”


Compares Tobe’s function with that of Dilsey in *The Sound and the Fury*. He is the moral center of the story, the only one capable of constructive action, and his name suggests “a world that is to be.”


Says that “Wash” is Faulkner’s best picture of a degenerate South, epitomized by the figure of Sutpen on his horse, Wash Jones’ apotheosis, and analyzes the way the images of the stallion and the man are gradually connected until they merge.


Offers a comment (pp. 745–48) on the ambiguity of the de Spain-Snopes conflict in “Barn Burning.” The Major is morally superior, but Abner Snopes is “the more morally serious of the two” since he has more to lose.

*The Sound and the Fury*


Emphasizes the similarity between Jason and the other two Compson brothers by analyzing his character and the structure of the novel. Jason, like Quentin, believes in an absolute system, but his is governed by luck and directed toward materialism. He is deluded about his own irrational impulses and the overall importance of his problems. His monologue moves in a circle, as do the others; he re-enacts Quentin’s fight with similar results, and ends up being driven back to Jefferson, immobile, like Benjy.

Baum, Catherine B. “The Beautiful One: Caddy Compson as Heroine
of The Sound and the Fury.” Modern Fiction Studies, XIII (Spring, 1967), 33–44.

Affirms that the aim of The Sound and the Fury is to allow the reader to piece together information and derive for himself a true picture of Caddy Compson.


The narrator of the fourth section of The Sound and the Fury is not Dilsey but a reader “enduring enough to have finished the first three sections and intelligent enough to have comprehended them.” He is limited, showing no foreknowledge, but gains insight and empathy with the characters.


Collects the scattered references to Jason’s cotton market speculation in The Sound and the Fury in order to plot his actual profit or loss and his reaction to the situation, which turns out, in every case, to be irrational, as when he counts money as a loss which he might have made, but did not. Faulkner’s picture of the cotton exchange, Cobau notes, conforms only generally to reality, the use of the episodes being to reveal Jason’s character.


Discusses the chronology and point of view in Conrad’s Lord Jim as predecessors of the techniques used by William Faulkner in The Sound and the Fury and Robbe-Grillet in The Voyeur. Conrad’s structural advancement was to spring the traditional time sequence and experiment with different points of view. The great-
est difference between his and "modern" works is that Faulkner and Robbe-Grillet are not obliged to set up their time shifts rationally, since "the progression is not from action to comprehension to consequence by way of a 'realistic' framework, but rather all three stages are confused in time and connected by poetic images." For instance, the mention of "trees" might cause Benjy's mind to jump in time to some memory of Caddy.


Claims that in *The Sound and the Fury* "the mirror is used to create a particularly expressive kind of image; it is also a symbol, prompting a variety of meanings and suggestions, and it serves as a motif, emphasizing analogous situations in other relationships throughout the book."


*The Sound and the Fury* is not based on a traditional unity of action, even a disrupted unity. What gives it significance is the unity of effect climaxed by Benjy's anguished howling in response to an ill-perceived chaos in the last scene.


Examines the structure of the last section of the novel with regard to its function of "closure." It consists of a prologue in which the three motifs to be presented, and that had been presented in the first three sections, are introduced, then moves on to explore each as possible endings. The first section, Dilsey's "Tragic-Christian Closure," examines the inadequacies of Christianity, and Jason's, "The Socio-Economic Closure," the inadequacies of materialism. The fact that the novel ends with Benjy's bellow imposing meaningless order on obvious chaos argues for nihilism.


Analyzes the different time senses in the four sections of *The Sound and the Fury*. The four-part structure emphasizes the contrast between the first three conceptions of time, the inadequacies of which are magnified by the use of interior monologue, and the conception in the last section, which is an objective description of
an individual who fits "profitably into the flow of time." In other words, Faulkner's narrative techniques make the reader distrust all time concepts except Dilsey's.


Contrasts the traditional use of the expression "Christmas Gift" in the South with "Merry Christmas" in the North. In the second section of The Sound and the Fury Quentin uses the expression in talking with an old Negro, thus underlining his affiliation with the past.


Substantiates Faulkner's statements in interviews to the effect that The Sound and the Fury began as a short story which became section one, because most of the revisions in that section serve to unite it to sections three and four. The revisions are of three types. Some add emphasis to the Christian symbolism of Benjy's birthday; some add references to the traveling show; and others delete colloquialisms in Negro speech, giving Benjy only one level of diction. In all cases the nature of the revisions suggests that they were made after the completion of sections three and four.


The action in The Sound and the Fury either presents itself as an image or is analogous to an image the reader already possesses. The Crucifixion, for instance, might be compressed into the image of the Cross.


Besides being an artistic masterpiece in itself, The Sound and the Fury is important in the history of the novel because it combines the opposed forms of the psychological novel—parts I, II, and III—and the romance—part IV.

Mellard, James M. "Caliban as Prospero: Benjy and The Sound and

Emphasizes Benjy’s relationship to Caliban and through him the pastoral tradition by establishing Benjy’s fundamental innocence, by comparing his function as a standard of behavior, against which the degradation of more sophisticated characters can be judged, to Caliban’s like function in *The Tempest*, and by showing how, structurally, Benjy functions as Prospero since he shapes all action through mnemonics—agon (conflict), pathos (catastrophe), sparagmos (separation), and anagnorisis (peace). However, Mellard points out that, for Faulkner, Benjy is not an end to strive for, but a starting point enjoyed by all who, unlike Dilsey, cannot “earn” his innocence.


Applies Freud’s three-fold definition of comedy to Jason’s section of *The Sound and the Fury*, explaining the difference between “humor,” which is single and introspective, “the comic,” which requires two individuals and is partly hostile, and “wit,” which requires three individuals and is purely hostile. After citing examples, Mellard analyzes the attitudes underlying each response and shows how Faulkner’s use of comic rhetoric contributes to an accurate characterization of Jason. For instance, Jason becomes hostile, uses more “wit,” in direct proportion to the threat he feels from other individuals. That is, he responds to their ability to harm him with an attack of his own.


Analyzes Quentin’s behavior in *The Sound and the Fury* by emphasizing the role of southern gentlemen he chooses to play, which is a way of avoiding reality and is typified by verbal cliches and adherence to the code. All the other characters in the novel, with the exceptions of Dilsey and Caddy, adapt their behavior to conform to other roles, but for the same reason. The result is individual isolation and frustration. Quentin’s actions on his last day are a parody of his earlier behavior, and his suicide is an attempt to reject cliche for action.

Infer the nature of the other characters in The Sound and the Fury from the names they apply to Benjy. Mrs. Compson's false pride moves her to change his name from Maury; the use of the full name, Benjamin, implies further pride or, in Quentin's case, a "symbolic cast of mind"; use of the nickname, Benjy, denotes acceptance of him as a human being, an individual, not a thing.


Cites the similarities between Holden Caulfield in The Catcher in the Rye and Quentin Compson in The Sound and the Fury. Both are almost incapable of love, the single exception in each case being a sister. Both are afraid of life, writes Peavy, so they want to isolate the objects of their affections by stopping the maturation process, the most important part of which is sex, which, for them, entails a loss of innocence. Both are sexually immature, remain virgins, and fight weakly to defend the honor of women. In addition, both are obsessed with death and at times desire self-destruction. Quentin's suicide is a defiance of change as is Holden's withdrawal.

_______. "A Note on the 'Suicide Pact' in The Sound and the Fury." English Language Notes, V (March, 1968), 207–09.

Uses external evidence (a Faulkner letter and a quotation) to refute the argument that Caddy entered into a "suicide pact" with Quentin and that she agreed to commit incest.


Criticizes Sartre's assertion that the past is more important than the present by pointing out that most of the quotations cited come from Quentin's father, Jason, who is not to be confused with the author.


Analyzes all four sections of The Sound and the Fury to see if its message conforms to that set forth in Faulkner's Nobel Prize acceptance speech. Walters' argument hinges on the interpretation of the fourth section, since the other three, he says, are distorted,
subjective views of reality. The fourth section is an objective one that presents true reality, the reality of Dilsey who both dwells in and transcends time, who can love, and who can endure. The attitude, then, is the same and The Sound and the Fury must be understood in order to appreciate the "good old verities."

Sanctuary


Sanctuary is an attack on the sterility and decay of the flapper culture of the 1920's.


Mentions Sanctuary in a discussion of the technique of the Gothic novel because it—all sensational elements aside—presents man in an atmosphere of evil, where the good is always ineffective and all morality is ambiguous. "The novel's point is that all men are victims of the evil in human nature; there can be no good distinct from evil."


Takes issue with the usual interpretation of Faulkner's remarks in the Modern Library edition of Sanctuary, saying that they were intended ironically. The emphasis is on internal evidence suggesting the existence of a "calendar of events" which would have enabled Faulkner to complete a well-structured work in three weeks.


Defends the credibility of Temple Drake's actions by showing that from the first, when faced with a choice, she invariably chooses the worse, like her refusal to try to leave the Old Frenchman's Place the first afternoon.


Disagrees with the critical opinion that the theme of Sanctuary has something vaguely to do with modern mechanistic society.
Rossky instead calls it an attempt to describe a chaotic nightmare world caught, suspended, in a menacing cosmos, just as Temple seems suspended, almost paralyzed with horror at Popeye's approach, just as the wheel of Benbow's car continues to spin idiotically after the crash in an agonizing parody of motion, and just as Miss Reba's dogs retreat, vicious and paralyzed, under the bed when confronted with the irrationality of their universe. The comment, then, is not just about social evil, or even human evil, but about cosmic chaos.

_Light in August_

Asals, Frederick. "Faulkner's _Light in August._" _The Explicator_, XXVI (May, 1968), item 74.

Compares the affair between Joe Christmas and Joanna Burden with the temptation of Christ.


_Light in August_, like all of Faulkner's novels, is a series of short stories held together by theme clusters. In this case the major theme is the outsider, who may be either passive, like Hightower, or dynamic, like Christmas.

Clark, William G. "Faulkner's _Light in August._" _The Explicator_, XXVI (March, 1968), item 54.

Claims Joe Christmas' violence stems from his need to be reassured that his quest is worthwhile.

_____. "Faulkner's _Light in August._" _The Explicator_, XXVIII (November, 1969), item 19.

Analyzes Joe Christmas' compulsive behavior. He goes to the stable before and after the murder of Joanna Burden because his subconscious drives him to follow the patterns laid down in his childhood by McEachern, who always administered punishment in a stable.


Cleanth Brooks's introduction to the paperback edition of _Light in August_ plays down the novel's racial overtones, emphasizes the theme of the outsider, and offers some general character analyses.

Argues that Lena Grove is not to be taken too seriously. She serves two functions: one is atmospheric, as a patently southern character; the other is catalytic, because her passivity urges others to action.


Composed of an introduction, two parts, and a selected bibliography, this book moves from the general to the particular. The introduction gives Minter’s own interpretation of *Light in August*, namely that the comic story of Lena Grove encompasses the two tragic stories of Christmas and Hightower. As for the book’s total impact, he feels that “before the violence and injustice that torture Faulkner’s work we must feel not only outrage and fury but also astonishment and bafflement,” hence an explanation of the tortured prose which composes the vision. Part One is made up of five full length general essays by Richard Chase, Olga Vickery, Darrel Abel, Cleanth Brooks, and Michael Millgate. Part Two contains very short excerpts on selected subjects: unity, religion, sexual relations, individual characters, etc.


Goes one step beyond Cleanth Brooks’s assertion that Hightower is radically changed by the end of the book by saying “that in a theological sense he has been redeemed” through the urging of Bunch and the opportunities for action offered by Joe Christmas and Lena Grove.

*Absalom, Absalom!* 


Maintains that *Absalom, Absalom!* is constructed to illustrate the impossibility of anyone’s knowing any relevant facts about the life of Sutpen. The failure of his design and all attempts to order events illustrate the human compulsion to see life in some logical order and the inevitable frustration of such attempts.


Sees structural parallels in *Absalom, Absalom!* between the scene
in which Rosa Coldfield narrates her story to Quentin and the one in which Quentin and Shreve analyze its meaning. The two scenes have some elements of inversion, cover about the same length of time, and contain the same kinds of images.


Argues that the principal theme of Absalom, Absalom! is a common one in Faulkner's works, "what it means to endure or not to endure." The focal point of the novel is Quentin, through whose eyes the story is seen, and whose situation is much like Henry's.

______. "‘New Men’ in Mississippi: Absalom, Absalom! and Dollar Cotton." Notes on Mississippi Writers, II (Fall, 1969), 55–66.

According to Bradford, the major difference between William Faulkner's Sutpen and John Faulkner's Otis Town is that Town presses upon the world "so that he may discover the fruitfulness of the land hidden from him in the hard clay and engender in such earth the plentitude that will fulfill him," while Sutpen does it in order to exalt himself.


Defends Miss Rosa's rhetoric on the grounds that she was an aspiring poetess, that many of her metaphors are not only appropriate but inspired, and that some of the prose actually is poetry.


In this novel Faulkner's two plots, one primary and historical, the other an interpretation of the first, serve to describe a poetical view of history in terms of action and reflection.


Calls Faulkner a post-realistic writer and describes the two plots of Absalom, Absalom! as a historical novel and a novel on history.

Asserts that in *Absalom, Absalom!* Thomas Sutpen's refusal to permit or acknowledge Negro blood in his line stems not from a stereotyped southern conception of the Negro as inferior, but from the fact that a Negro butler, who becomes the symbol of all the design is to revenge, was the instrument of his degradation.


Contains an essay entitled "*Absalom, Absalom!: The Extended Simile*" (pp. 69–108) in which Mr. Compson, Rosa, and Quentin are said to find a "gap between experience and meaning." Quentin's narration is the best try; it is a vital, articulate vision that fails because it is based only on speculation. Guetti then links Quentin's failure to that of Sutpen whose whole life is an attempt to make experience meaningful by making it adhere to a pattern. The design and the narration are illustrations of the impossibility of using language to create a metaphor for reality. In other words, both Sutpen's story and all three narratives "may not exist as comprehensible experience at all."


A systematic analysis of *Absalom, Absalom!* and Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* with regard to techniques employed to indicate a shift in narrator in the contemporary multiple-point-of-view novel.


In *Absalom, Absalom!,* Faulkner differentiates between his characters' points of view not by language but by genre. Rosa Coldfield's version is a Gothic mystery, Mr. Compson's a Greek tragedy, Quentin's a chivalric romance, and Shreve's a tall tale.


Maintains that even though there is no earth goddess like Lena Grove in *Absalom, Absalom!* Thomas Sutpen is still warring against the female principle, which Lorch equates with Nature and passivity. In other words, man must try to conquer the female
just as he does the land. The first two parts of the novel present Sutpen's male accomplishments in a world of men, and the second two show his downfall in a world dominated by women.


Sutpen, unlike David, who, while trying to build a dynasty, managed to keep his basic humanity, refuses to recognize "individual human worth" even in his own sons, thus causing his destruction.


Argues that in *Absalom, Absalom!* Rosa Coldfield, Mr. Compson, and Quentin discuss history in figurative language, "but in their narrations clusters of figures do not describe their words so much as become it." History is perceived as metaphor.

Singleton, Marvin K. "Personae at Law and Equity: The Unity of Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*" *Papers on Language and Literature*, III (Fall, 1967), 354–70.

Uses various allusions to law in *Absalom, Absalom!* to introduce a view of Sutpen as a Medieval Common Law Baron, a sort of legalistic "martinet" a la Blackstone. According to Singleton, Sutpen is always concerned with the expedient rules of law, not moral values. Also, "Faulkner makes significant use of Equity pleading as a narrative device and the general frame of the novel corresponds in large part to a hearing on a Bill in Chancery before Quentin and Shreve as 'Chancery Masters.'"


Explicates the meaning of the mare's name in "Wash" and *Absalom, Absalom!* In "Wash" Griselda is like the character in Chaucer's "Clerk's Tale" since she satisfies her master's desires by producing a male. The name change to Penelope in *Absalom, Absalom!* provides a more meaningful symbol for trustworthiness (Odysseus' wife) and the allusion to the *Odyssey* adds to the epic quality of the novel.

Waggoner, Hyatt H. "The Historical Novel and the Southern Past:
The Case of *Absalom, Absalom!*” *Southern Literary Journal, II* (Spring, 1970), 69–85.

Claims that *Absalom, Absalom!* cannot be considered a historical novel because of Faulkner’s attitude toward history. In the novel all points of view are to be questioned since none are, or can be, correct. History is characterized by motion and any attempt to arrest that motion changes it. Only an approximation can be reached and that only through the use of creative imagination. Waggoner denies the southernness and the historicity of the novel, saying it bears more on the present and the universal than on the regional and historical.


In *Absalom, Absalom!* Faulkner deliberately misleads the reader to prove that “the search for fact and the speculation about meaning can never arrive at the truth.”

*The Hamlet*


According to Broughton, all the men in *The Hamlet* try to assert their masculinity by dominating women or by withdrawing from sexuality into the monastic atmosphere of the country store front porch. Mink Snopes and Jack Houston are offered as examples of dominators who feel that they must either possess their women or be possessed themselves; Labove is a withdrawer, and Ratliff is asexual, uninvolved. Ike Snopes, the idiot, is the only male in the book with the proper balance of passion and compassion.


Finds the humor of *The Hamlet* to be of two kinds: a blend of southwestern frontier humor, which depends on hyperbole, understatement, oxymoron, and colloquial diction; and surrealist humor, which depends on incongruous juxtaposition.


Faulkner uses the “Spotted Horses” episode to expose the uni-
versal desire to “trim” the other fellow in the residents of Frenchman’s Bend and eventually in Ratliff.


Says in Chapter III, “Play, The Fractured Self, and American Angry Comedy: From Faulkner to Salinger” (pp. 56–77), that Faulkner reproduces isolated sides of human nature by creating characters that are like “forces in the mind.” His country people are ruled by single drives and in The Hamlet all obsessions with competition, sex, and survival are frustrated. Faulkner “forecast the end of pastoral hopes gone sour in a commercial society.”


Announces two dominant themes in The Hamlet: Waste and Love. The waste of Eula, the life force, is brought about by the emotional impotence of all the other characters, particularly Flem Snopes. The only two males capable of love are Mink and Ike Snopes, both of whom are brought to grief, Mink going to prison and Ike losing his cow, through the actions of characters who are emotionally impotent.


Views the horses as symbolic of the evil propagated by Flem Snopes in a passive community. Snopes is made unnatural, set apart from the rest of mankind, by his total lack of human weakness—beastfulness, anger—and of human desire—hunger, sex.

Wall, Carey. “Drama and Technique in Faulkner’s The Hamlet.” Twentieth Century Literature, XIV (April, 1968), 17–23.

Considers the plot similarities in the episodes in The Hamlet. In each, someone reaches for prizes which “vanish like so many illusions.” Faulkner’s private vision is of a world of men fighting a losing battle against fate but fighting all the same because they are convinced of the justice of their cause and even sometimes winning, if only temporarily.

Go Down, Moses

Bradford, M. E. “All the Daughters of Eve: ‘Was’ and the Unity of

“Was” sets the theme of the entire collection and is especially important in interpreting “The Bear.” The McCaslin twins refuse to enter society but “the consequences of trying too hard to escape from that natural human condition of ‘fate’ which includes women may be worse than that fate itself. Grand and well-meaning schemes and understandable fears notwithstanding, nature will eventually either have its way or exact its price.”


Analyzes the gum tree scene in “The Bear” and its relation to the endurance theme, which is defined as a balance of humility and pride. Too much humility results in passivity (Ike) and too much pride results in the exploitation of Nature (Boon, who now works for the railroad).


Suggests that the reason Old Ben is almost invulnerable is that the hunters are under-gunned; they react to a new situation by using old answers that are no longer good enough.


Sees Isaac McCaslin as a modern romantic hero who refuses to accept his existential or social self, dwelling instead on his natural self. He sees the latter as good and the former as bad, not recognizing that both are amoral as symbolized by the duality of Ben, Lion, and Sam Fathers.


Quotes from Faulkner in the University (Joseph L. Blotner and Frederick Gwynn, eds., Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1959) to support the idea that “The Bear” should be read as an anti-symbolic lament for a vanishing way of life, “a simple story of men and animals in a Southern wilderness playing out the last act of a long contractual relationship.”

Kearful, Frank J. “Tony Last and Ike McCaslin: The Loss of a Us-
Faulkner Bibliography

Faulkner's and Waugh's heroes are both separated from their past, the historical source of virtues which, paradoxically, now limits their perceptions and constricts their actions. "The human truth they reveal for us is the absurdity, nobility, and sinfulness of seeking in the ideal a better world than can be lived in."


Compares the unity of Go Down, Moses with that of the Bible because both are held together by recurring patterns of narrative, theme, and character and by similar "rhythms of life": Eden, the fall, exile and death, and a hope of redemption. The outlook of the novel is essentially comic and the stories are matched in repetitive patterns. "Was" and "The Old People" are romances; "The Fire and the Hearth" and "The Bear" are miniature epics; "Pantaloons in Black" and "Delta Autumn" are ironic; and the coda is the title story, "Go Down, Moses," which emphasizes the structures and comic tone of the rest of the volume.


Compares plot and thematic parallels in Huck Finn and "The Bear" and finds that "what binds Faulkner and Twain together is the central poetic insight that American freedom should be moral as well as political, psychological as well as physical."


Accuses Faulkner of romanticizing in "The Fire and the Hearth" by blaming prejudice on Nature, on an "accident of geography," rather than on racial indoctrination, "on the shoulders of man where it properly belongs."


 Corrects a footnote in The American Tradition in Literature which identifies Lucas Beauchamp as Tennie's Jim's son in "The Bear" when, in fact, they are brothers.

Maintains that Lion represents not mechanized civilization but a force of Nature like Old Ben. From the meeting of the two Ike learns about the undying spirit of Nature of which he is a part, and this knowledge causes him to live by his own sweat rather than accept his corrupt inheritance.

Other Books


The thesis of this article, "the force of As I Lay Dying is in its opacity" receives support from four propositions. There is no moral or morality and "it seems to breathe out rather than posit a world view." Life is the antagonist and the protection of family is no better than essential isolation. Darl has no identity and represents elemental nakedness, while Cash is a sort of hero sustained by pride. The very language of the novel is free, proud, a testament to man's "ambition to create an object, whether a building or a prose, that is his own."


Uses Jewel in As I Lay Dying to analyze Faulkner's techniques of characterization, which are divided into six categories: characterization through straight physical description, through the character's speeches, through his thoughts, through character foiling, through opinions of other characters, and, most important, through his actions.


Classifies the characters in Mosquitoes into artists and non-artists, finding in each case that the sexual position mirrors the artistic one. All the artists are either sterile, like Mark Frost, perverted, like Eva Wiseman, or have lost their fertility, like Fairchild. The non-artists, more or less, repeat the same pattern, but Patricia is the exception, as is Gordon in the artistic group, since both are at least capable of leading full lives.


Asserts that the convict, by his own choice, rejects his freedom
in order to regain security represented by the maternal influence of Parchman, since the story ends with the convict in a fetal position, having welcomed an additional ten-year sentence.


Condemns As I Lay Dying for inconsistency because there is no "fictive present" for the reader to consult and defines the term as "the point of narration . . . the present of the narrator."


Traces the following Faulknerian characteristics and themes in embryo: place description, social classes, the past and present, treatment of Negroes, religion, and females, among others.


Traces the history of Requiem for a Nun from its conception to the Broadway production in 1959, almost a decade later. New information is offered to explain why many of the changes in Albert Camus' famous French adaptation conform to the changes made in the William Faulkner-Ruth Ford play script. The authors write that Miss Ford sent Camus an unsolicited copy of the play script bearing only Faulkner's name. Camus then asked permission directly from Faulkner to adapt the work and went ahead with production, never knowing of Miss Ford's part in the rewrite.


Describes The Reivers as Faulkner's farewell to the Yoknapatawpha Saga because it fills in characters only mentioned in other books and brings the action up to date.


Argues that the character Lucas, in Intruder in the Dust, progresses from humanity to "super-identity" in the latter part of the novel when Faulkner makes him stand for the Negro.

Points out that because of mishandling by editors or proofreaders *The Wild Palms* has never been presented to the public in its appropriate form; some 650 variants appear. The two parts of the novel are said to cohere as alternating examples of the philosophy of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.


Calls the plot of *Sartoris* a retelling of the story of Cain and Abel. Bayard’s offering, himself, is unacceptable; he stands in John’s shadow and guiltily wishes him dead. The guilt feelings make death Bayard’s only escape.


Defends the Reverend Whitfield in *As I Lay Dying* from the charge of hypocrisy by arguing that Addie dies before he can confess, and asserts, instead, that he is one of Faulkner’s enduring characters.


Attempts to prove that the reporter is the central character in *Pylon*, not the pilots. He offers love, which is refused since “the Heroes are always incapable of love, gift or receipt.”


Divides the imagery in *The Wild Palms* into four categories based on the old belief in four basic elements—fire, air, water, and earth—and insists that Faulkner’s characters are circumscribed, cast, by the elements because there is “interplay between matter and the human spirit.”


Draws four conclusions about the nature of war from *A Fable*: during war the population tends to surrender too many powers to the military; military leaders often perpetuate war rather than trying for peace; war protest affirms the values of society; and the individual who makes a public moral protest will be punished but may gain freedom for others.

Traces the sources and Faulkner's use of biblical material in *As I Lay Dying*. The Old Testament rather than the New is found to be the source of most of the allusions, which are usually used ironically. Sanderlin then attempts to present an interpretation that integrates the themes of the novel with its mythic implications, depending heavily on critical collaboration from Olga Vickery, and concluding that Cash is a Christ figure who "reflects an attainment of maturity through his suffering and love."


Contrasts Bayard Sartoris' psychological time—the past—with natural time—the seasons, procreation—represented by the Negro farmer, Miss Jenny, and the MacCallums.


*Sartoris* is the most interesting of Faulkner's works because "the thematic movement from chaos to order proves, better than any other single idea, the grand scheme of Faulkner's life work."


Compares Camus' production of the play in 1956 with the Ruth Ford productions and offers only praise for Camus while dismissing Ford's adaptation as "stagey" and her performance as done. Her part in the rewrite is also questioned (see Izard and Hieronymous, *Requiem for a Nun: Onstage and Off*).


Claims that the pseudo-creator, Bayard Sartoris, is responsible for the romantic tone of the novel because his attempt to repudiate the code is merely a reaffirmation of "bravado."


Sees *The Reivers* as a comment on the illusiveness of the individual's conception of the past, a problem personified by the narrator who, in Vorpahl's analogy, is compared to both the narrator and the participants in Mark Twain's "How to Tell a Story," which
instructs the raconteur in the art of making the audience forget their own identities by the use of atmosphere, an important pause, and a "snapper," which occurs when they are brought back to reality. Vorpahl compares this effect to that of The Reivers, specifically the use of moonlight to denote the confusion of reality with imagination, and most specifically, the moonlight which bathes Lucius at Ballenbaugh's when he confuses the real with the imagined and is jarred by Boon's laughter. The point is that Faulkner, through his narrator, seems to be commenting on the impossibility of "was."

**MISCELLANEOUS STUDIES**


Deplores the academic treatment of the three authors and advocates "gut criticism," a view which sees Faulkner as "able to invest human tragedy and defeat with ever-widening circles of meaning."


Applies, by inference, Faulkner's themes of "pride," "humility," "endurance," and individualism to contemporary race relations, pointing out that these doctrines prescribe help only for those who have exhausted their own resources, thus demeaning neither the benefactor nor the recipient.


Offers two essays on Faulkner. "Faulkner by Daylight" (pp. 358–60) gives Cowley's first impressions of The Hamlet. In "Faulkner: Voodoo Dance" (pp. 268–71) he maintains that Faulkner's prose is really closer to poetry.


Surveys William Styron's debt to Faulkner in his use of interior monologue and poetical organization of images.

Highlights parallel structures and techniques in Butor's *Passage de Milan, L'Emploi du temps, La Modification,* and *Degrés* and Faulkner's "The Bear," *The Sound and the Fury, As I Lay Dying,* and *Absalom, Absalom!*


Asks if Faulkner ever acknowledged a debt to any particular philosopher.


Uses "The Bear" as an example in an argument in favor of the term "novella" over the others mentioned in the title.


Reviews *The Wishing Tree* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1967) and says it is full of "the kind of magic which appeals, I think, to children of all ages."


Defines individualism within the Puritan tradition by examining certain "versions" of it in the works of Edwards, Hawthorne, Emerson, Twain, Dos Passos, William James, and Faulkner.


Compares Cary's narrative technique to that used in *The Sound and the Fury.*


Uses Faulkner as a representative of "The Southern Renaissance" to which younger writers are contrasted.


Cites examples from *Absalom, Absalom!* and "The Bear" while discussing parallels in the fictional treatment of a decadent or fallen aristocracy in Latin American and southern literature.

Rubin, Louis D., Jr. *The Curious Death of the Novel: Essays in*

Contains two essays which pertain to Faulkner. In "Notes on a Rear-Guard Action" (pp. 131-51), Rubin uses Light in August as an example of a southern novel which is not about the South. It is southern in the sense that it is ordered by a distinctly southern sensibility, but the theme—the importance of Love—is universal. "The Difficulties of Being a Southern Writer Today or, Getting Out from under William Faulkner" (pp. 282-93) is an examination of the problems of younger southern writers who must take Faulkner's work into account without imitating him. His experience is, in part, still valid, but the post-World War II South is vastly different from his and demands a different expression because the contest between tradition and progress is over.


Offers Faulkner, Marquand, and Hemingway as examples of writers who recorded the failure of American society brought about by the tortured economic struggle which occurred between 1890 and the First World War.


Contrasts Faulkner's optimistic treatment of religion in The Sound and the Fury with Styron's pessimistic one in Lie Down in Darkness. The implication is that Styron's debt to Faulkner is not so great as such critics as William Van O'Connor and Malcolm Cowley believe.


Complains that critics often corrupt Faulkner's text to suit their own purposes.