

(Ebook free) Faulkner, Mississippi

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Edouard Glissant

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Edouard Glissant : Faulkner, Mississippi before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Faulkner, Mississippi:

In 1989, the Caribbean writer Edouard Glissant visited Rowan Oak, William Faulkner's home in Oxford, Mississippi. His visit spurred him to write a revelatory book about the work of one of our greatest but still least-understood

American writers."A fascinating way to read Faulkner. . . .[Glissant's] case is nothing less than that, no matter how Faulkner's personal Furies twisted his public speech, Faulkner was a great, world-beating multiculturalist."Jonathan Levi, Los Angeles Times Book Review"A sharp, challenging, and wholly unique tour of Yoknapatawpha County." Kirkus Reviews"Passionate. . . . Glissant's prose sometimes vies with Faulkner's for intricacy and evocative nuance." Scott McLemee, Newsday"Glissant tries to engage Faulkner on many fronts simultaneously, positioning himself as a critic, a fellow artist and as a descendant of slaves. . . He makes a convincing case that Faulkner is not just another 'dead white male author.'"Scott Yarbrough, Raleigh News Observer"[An] ambitious and, at times, rambunctious expedition into Yoknapatawpha County." Christine Schwartz Hartley, New York Times Book Review

From Publishers WeeklySetting out to perform a "fresh reading" of Faulkner, Glissant, a Martinican novelist and poet (Black Salt), admirably avoids the verbal thickets of academic prose. His nonlinear, impressionistic critique, nevertheless, seems ready-made for the academy. Glissant's vantage as a Caribbean francophone lends him a perspective on Faulkner, race and region that is especially enlightening. The book opens with Glissant's account of traveling in Louisiana and Mississippi, gracefully sketching the landscape while evoking how alien he feels in the American South. After a brief overview of Faulkner's life and work (including all the novels, but concentrating on the Yoknapatawpha saga), the author plunges into the question of Faulkner and race, and here the book grows wildly diffuse. He exposes an ambivalence in Faulkner's workAa disturbing tendency to portray black people as irrational and bestial coupled with a conviction that the South's poverty and despair spring from its mistreatment of African-Americans. Also intriguing are the links he finds between Faulkner and French colonial writers such as Camus and Saint-John Perse. Glissant's careful detective work never leads to a significant larger point, however. As his focus widens, his reflections on contemporary life and theoretical mattersAtime and space, written vs. spoken language, the epic and the nature of communityAform a sometimes bewildering collage. This may be the point, however. "The unbound openness of the work is such that anyone can find a suitable path among those Faulkner proposes without betraying or losing oneself," he writes of Faulkner's oeuvre. The same may be said of Glissant's book, though that doesn't make it any easier to follow. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Library JournalIn this brief, densely written, but unfortunately somewhat turgid volume, Glissant surveys the entirety of Faulkner's fiction to explore not only the relatively familiar themes of violence, the fall of the Old South (Compsons) and rise of the New (Snopeses), territorial conquest and ownership, community, and ancestry but also the manifestations of the Nobel prize winner's seldom-noted equivocations over racism in the South. Glissant does not organize his discussion around the various works but rather around the main themes he finds in Faulkner's fiction. A well-known black writer from Martinique for whom English is a second language, he demonstrates both an astonishing familiarity with the most minute particulars of the whole range of Faulkner's work on the American South and a remarkable ear for the different styles Faulkner usedAdifferences that may be more noticeable to a nonnative speaker. Touted by its publisher as a "highly original new book," Faulkner, Mississippi is just that. Highly recommended for academic libraries with extensive Faulkner collections.ACharles Crawford Nash, Cottey Coll., Nevada, MO Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Kirkus sAn elegant, erudite, and at times baffling reconsideration of Faulkner by a giant of Caribbean literature. A Martinican who first encountered Faulkner in French translation, Glissant launches his reappraisal after touring the novelist's house, Rowan Oak. His reaction to the poet laureate of the past-haunted South is filtered through his puzzled attempts to apprehend how the contemporary South is emblematic of the American wholebanal roadsides cluttered with fast-food restaurants, the cultural nonchalance toward violencemaking this part travelogue, part cultural and literary criticism. Glissant's general affability is demonstrated by his address of race in Faulkner: ``How can you reduce Faulkner's pantheistic Comedy to what he did or did not say about the race question in the United States? But how can you fail to take this question into consideration?" He argues for the importance of the exercise, contending that ``Faulkner's oeuvre will be complete when it is revisited and made `effective' by African-Americans," and he credits Toni Morrison with beginning the project. Glissant brings a unique perspective to Faulkner's work: as a Martinican, he comes from a colonial culture built on a slave-based plantation economy like the Souths (and thus views slavery with a broader perspective than most Americans); as an outsider, he's both an objective analyst and something of an awestruck tourist. Glissant is good at sketching the big picture of Faulkner's lifework (how the novels fit together, what role the stories play) and small details (he charts the three modes of Faulkner's writing, ``the hidden, the described, and the inexpressible" and sheds light on how the author's trademark style contributes to his themes). It's the middle groundthe discussion of individual novelsthat's sometimes hard to follow. The difficulty of analyzing Faulkner's entire body of work in a short book may be due more to the novels' complexity (they don't lend themselves to brief synopses) than to any shortcomings of Glissant's. A sharp, challenging, and wholly unique tour of Yoknapatawpha County. -- Copyright 1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.