



## Still in Print: The Southern Novel Today

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In *Still in Print*, eighteen southern novels published since 1997 fall under the careful scrutiny of an international cast of accomplished literary critics to identify the very best of recent writings in the genre. These essays highlight the praiseworthy efforts of a pantheon of novelists celebrating and challenging regionality, unearthing manifestations of the past in the present, and looking to the future with wit and healthy skepticism.

Organized around shared themes of history, place, humor, and malaise, the novels discussed here interrogate southern culture and explore the region's promise for the future. Four novels reconsider the Civil War and its aftermath as Charles Frazier, Kaye Gibbons, Josephine Humphreys, and Pam Durban revisit the past and add fresh insights to contemporary discussions of race and gender through their excursions into history. The novels by Steve Yarbrough, Larry Brown, Chris Offutt, Barry Hannah, and James Lee Burke demonstrate a keen sense of place, rooted in a South marked by fundamentalism, poverty, violence, and rampant prejudice but still capable of promise for some unseen future. The comic fiction of George Singleton, Clyde Edgerton, James Wilcox, Donald Harington, and Lewis Nordan shows how southern humor still encompasses customs and speech reflected in concrete places. Ron Rash, Richard Ford, and Cormac McCarthy probe the depths of human existence, often with disturbing results, as they write about protagonists cut off from their own humanity and desperate to reconnect with the human race. Diverse in content but unified in genre, these particular novels have been nominated by the contributors to *Still in Print* for long-term survival as among the best modern representations of the southern novel.

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