



Grit Lit: A Rough South Reader

From University of South Carolina Press

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Drawing on storytelling traditions as old as southern literature itself, *Grit Lit* is the first anthology devoted to contemporary writing about the Rough South. From literary legends to emerging voices, the acclaimed writers featured in this collection view their hardscrabble South without romanticism or false nostalgia, not through moonlight and magnolia but moonshine and Marlboros. This is the dirty South as captured by those rooted in its land yet able to share its stories with candor and courage. *Grit Lit* guides readers through tales both tall and true, intoxicating stories of loss, violence, failure, feuds, family, and--above all--survival against the odds. Raw and raucous, *Grit Lit* gathers some of the most provocative writing to come out of the South in the last thirty years. With a preface by Edgar Award-winning author Tom Franklin and Brian Carpenter's introduction to the genre's origins and influences, this bold anthology lays bare the Rough South in all its battered glory and dares readers not to stare in awe.

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Editorial Review

Review

"...the entire atmosphere and storytelling tradition of the "Grit Lit" genre resembles what AMC turned into television over the past five years with the teacher-turned-drug-lord epic, *Breaking Bad*. If Walter White, the show's protagonist, doesn't fit the description of "a man with little hope of salvation trying to salvage what he can," then no modern character does."-- Craig Manning, Independent Publisher

"Hats off to the editors and publisher who 'birthed' this amazing and needed anthology representing the best of a provocative subsegment of southern American literature. . . . There is lots of beer drinkin', fast drivin', and cussin' going on in these pieces by such rousing bright lights in the southern firmament as Dorothy Allison, Larry Brown, Barry Hannah, and William Gay. The book is inaugurated on the highest plateau with the late Harry Crews' opening segment, 'A Childhood: The Biography of a Place,' one of the best father remembrances you'll ever read. . . . The lifestyles and lives all of these authors write about may not be sweet, but the ring of quality throughout the book is certainly sweet to the ear."

--Booklist (starred review)

"While the focus of the collection is on the "rough south," there is a great range and diversity of styles and subject matter in the memoirs and stories. Overall, you get a sense of the richness and diversity of contemporary Southern writing."

- Robert Morgan, BookPage

"New York Times best-seller Franklin and freelancer Carpenter anthologize here for the first time Grit Lit--bleak, violent, and sometimes blackly funny stories of 'poor southern white' folks--in an attempt to 'refocus the attention back where it belongs--on the writing itself rather than on the alleged exploits of the contributors.' Featured here are Rough South mainstays such as Harry Crews, Dorothy Allison, and Barry Hannah, as well as some lesser-known writers like Anne Pancake and newcomer Alex Taylor. . . . These selections do reveal the genre's breadth, from realism to postmodernism, from Southern gothic to country noir. . . . Students, teachers, and Rough South devotees will also find helpful the critical and recommended reading, viewing, and listening sections hunkered in the back of the book."

--Publishers Weekly

"Bravo! As an enthusiast of literature of the 'Rough South,' I am thrilled to see this latest recognition in an extraordinary reader. Tom Franklin's thorough definition of the term grit helps readers like me to accept the term that even Larry Brown found offensive as applied to his work and himself. Brian Carpenter's introduction to the collection is complete--eminently informative and sensitively written. I also applaud the broad range of writers included in the volume. When I teach 'Writers of the Rough South' again, this outstanding reader will be part of the class materials. The general enthusiast of literature of the South, too, will relish its content."--Jean W. Cash, author of *Larry Brown: A Writer's Life*

"There may be too many good manners and cupcakes, too much prissibility, in what is fashionably called

'Southern Literature.' Here in Grit Lit you'll find some needed and necessary cutting to the bone, some ass kicking, drooling, yelling, and shooting up the house and refrigerator, some use of tools from a toolshed, not a toolbar. Some hurt and love. And some delicate, precision writing by talented women and men writers, including those we've lost too soon: McLaurin, Brown, and now Gay, Hannah, Crews, and Nordan. The whole world needs this book, its daring and direct stare, its treasures."--Clyde Edgerton

From the Inside Flap

An anthology of memoirs and fiction by some of the most acclaimed writers in contemporary Southern literature

About the Author

A graduate of Centre College and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Brian Carpenter is a freelance writer and editor. His articles on the South have appeared in Southern Cultures, Southern Literary Journal, Southern Review, The Companion to Southern Literature, and the anthology Cornbread Nation 1: The Best Southern Food Writing.

A native of Dickinson, Alabama, Tom Franklin is the Edgar Award-winning author of Poachers, Hell at the Breech, Smonk, and the New York Times best seller Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter. Franklin teaches creative writing at the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Linda Cunningham:

Do you have favorite book? Should you have, what is your favorite's book? Guide is very important thing for us to understand everything in the world. Each book has different aim or even goal; it means that book has different type. Some people sense enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. They may be reading whatever they acquire because their hobby is definitely reading a book. What about the person who don't like reading through a book? Sometime, man feel need book when they found difficult problem or even exercise. Well, probably you will require this Grit Lit: A Rough South Reader.

Katherine Ouellette:

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