

Folks, Jeffrey J.

### In a Time of Disorder

Form and Meaning in Southern Fiction from Poe to O'Connor

New York, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt/M., Oxford, Wien, 2003. XI, 146 pp.

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### Book synopsis

As Andrew Lytle noted, southern fiction has been written «in a time of disorder» that has its origin in a post-Enlightenment privileging of unconstrained individualism and personal freedom. Southern writers from Edgar Allan Poe to Flannery O'Connor have employed narrative form in efforts to restore order and meaning, often despite the conviction that society is governed to a great extent by mere chance or injustice. *In a Time of Disorder* examines the ways in which southern writers, including Twain, Faulkner, Wright, and Welty, have struggled to wrest form and meaning from a historical world increasingly perceived as purposeless, disordered, and corrupt. Although southern writers have responded to a sense of cultural disorder in various ways, ranging from religious orthodoxy to skepticism, their fictions express a common need to explore sources of order and meaning or, at the very least, to confront their absence.

### About the author(s)/editor(s)

The Author: Jeffrey J. Folks received his Ph.D. in English from Indiana University at Bloomington. He has taught in colleges and universities in the United States, Europe, and Japan, where he serves as Professor of English at Doshisha University. He has published five books and numerous journal articles on southern and African American fiction, most recently, *From Richard Wright to Toni Morrison: Ethics in Modern and Postmodern American Narrative* (Peter Lang, 2001).

### Reviews

«'In a Time of Disorder' is an outstanding collection of essays on a wide variety of topics, which include discussions of southern writers early and late, major and minor.» (Fred Hobson, Lineberger Professor of the Humanities, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

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