



Southern Excursions: Views on Southern Letters in My Time

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Edited by James Conrad McKinley. Few if any are better endowed than George Garrett to comment on the general and the particular, the long, and the short, of southern letters in our time. Garrett—a prolific and internationally renowned author of fiction, poetry, drama, and biography as well as a teacher, editor, critic, and frequent jurist for literary competitions—has been immersed in the writers and literature of his native region for almost a half century. *Southern Excursions* contains more than fifty of the best essays, reviews, and other short pieces of his career.

Without sacrificing reverence for modern masters such as Faulkner, O'Connor, and Welty, Garrett has consistently embraced worthy new artists through the years, deftly and judiciously drawing the line between critical acclaim and popular success. If some of the names of those he champions sound less familiar, Garrett, in these pages, will inspire readers to swift investigation. His charm, wit, and anecdotal style make reading *Southern Excursions* a delight, and yet there's no mistaking his erudition. Wise like a prophet, with a talent scout's enthusiasm, Garrett is not afraid to tell unwelcome truths, covering topics that include southern publishing houses and literary quarterlies, the alliance between writers and academia, the state of criticism and theory, and, most eloquently, the persistence of place, memory, and the Civil War as themes in southern letters.

Southern Excursions is a book for the ages, stowing as it does the sage views of one as learned, respected—and modest—in his time as George Garrett.

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