

New Book of Essays on William Faulkner's Writing Opens New Angle for Studying His Work

Contributed by Rebecca Lauck Cleary
07/02/2009

OXFORD, Miss. – A new book on the writing of Nobel Prize-winning author William Faulkner offers a new angle to explore the writer's work.

"Global Faulkner" is a collection of essays that considers the many ways Faulkner's writing interacted with the world's economies. The essays were presented and studied last year during UM's 35th annual Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference.

The book is the newest addition to the University Press of Mississippi's Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha series. (Note: The 36th annual conference is scheduled July 19-23 at UM, and the study subject is "Faulkner and Mystery." For more information, visit <http://www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner/> .)

The new book of essays places Faulkner's fiction in a global context, offering perspectives that link his work to globalization and postcolonial concerns. The book was edited by UM members Annette Trefzer, associate professor of English, and Ann J. Abadie, associate director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture.

"The book probes not only Faulkner's global dimensions, the international circulation of his books and international influences but also the question – very simply – of whether Faulkner was interested in the global scheme of things," said Trefzer, who is also the author of "Disturbing Indians: The Archaeology of Southern Fiction" (University of Alabama Press, 2006).

The questions considered in "Global Faulkner" include whether or not Faulkner was aware of such occurrences as the global slave trade, traffic of goods, network of writers and circulations of popular culture.

"And in the process of answering these questions, the scholars posit that Faulkner is not only perhaps the most famous regional writer, a Southern writer and a Nobel Prize winner, but even more so, a writer of the Global South," Trefzer said. "For me, seeing the global currents in Faulkner's work provides a most exciting new lens for Faulkner studies."

The scholars contributing to the collection commenting on Faulkner's importance are also global – from America, Spain, Italy, Japan and Guinea. They include Melanie R. Benson, Manuel Broncano, Keith Cartwright, Leigh Anne Duck, George B. Handley, Jeff Kareem, Mario Materassi, John T. Matthews, Tierno Monenembo, Elizabeth Steeby and Takako Tanaka.