



Larry Brown and the Blue-Collar South

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With contributions from Robert G. Barrier, Robert Beuka, Thomas Ærvold Bjerre, Jean W. Cash, Robert Donahoo, Richard Gaughran, Gary Hawkins, Darlin' Neal, Keith Perry, Katherine Powell, John A. Staunton, and Jay Watson

Larry Brown is noted for his subjects--rural life, poverty, war, and the working class--and his spare, gritty style. Brown's oeuvre spans several genres and includes acclaimed novels (*Dirty Work*, *Joe*, *Father and Son*, *The Rabbit Factory*, and *A Miracle of Catfish*), short story collections (*Facing the Music*, *Big Bad Love*), memoir (*On Fire*), and essay collections (*Billy Ray's Farm*). At the time of his death, Brown (1951-2004) was considered to be one of the finest exemplars of minimalist, raw writing of the contemporary South.

Larry Brown and the Blue-Collar South considers the writer's full body of work, placing it in the contexts of southern literature, Mississippi writing, and literary work about the working class. Collectively, the essays explore such subjects as Brown's treatment of class politics, race and racism, the aftereffects of the Vietnam War on American culture, the evolution of the South from a plantation-based economy to a postindustrial one, and male-female relations. The role of Brown's mentors--Ellen Douglas and Barry Hannah--in shaping his work is discussed, as is Brown's connection to such writers as Harry Crews and Dorothy Allison. The volume is one of the first critical studies of a writer whose depth and influence mark him as one of the most well-regarded Mississippi authors.

Jean W. Cash is professor of English at James Madison University. She is the author of *Flannery O'Connor: A Life*. Keith Perry is associate professor of English at Dalton State College and the author of *The Kingfish in Fiction: Huey P. Long and the Modern American Novel*. Rick Bass is the author of novels and collections of nonfiction and short stories, most recently *The Lives of Rocks: Stories*.

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