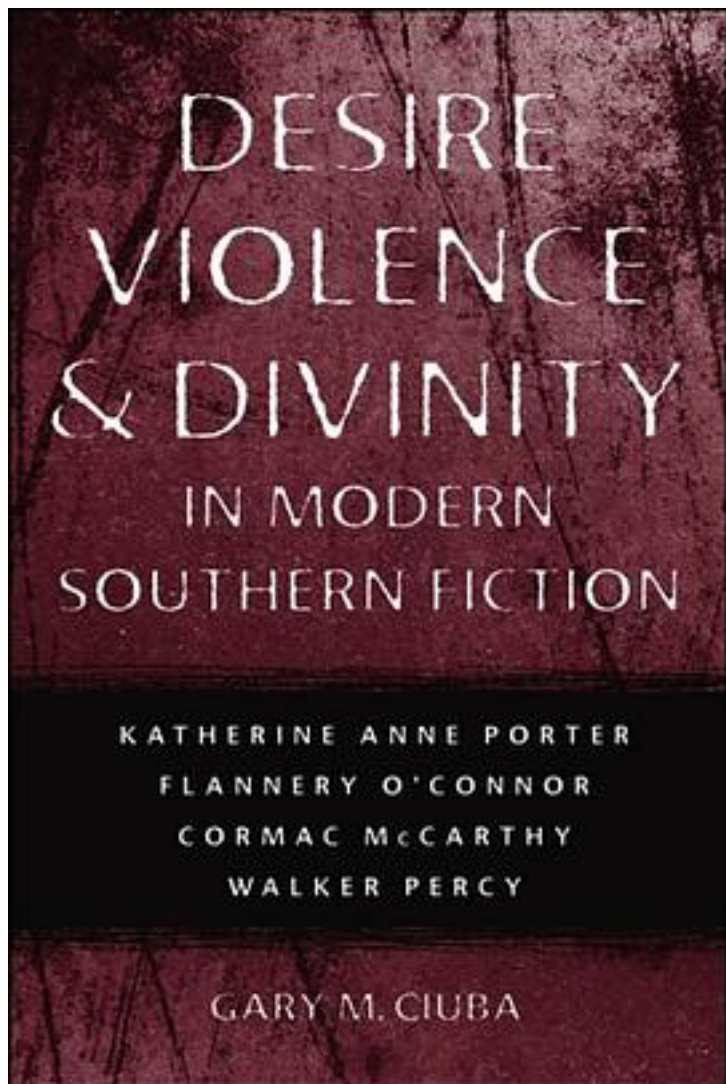


# Desire, Violence, & Divinity in Modern Southern Fiction



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In this groundbreaking study, Gary M. Ciuba examines how four of the South's most probing writers of twentieth-century fiction—Katherine Anne Porter, Flannery O'Connor, Cormac McCarthy, and Walker Percy—expose the roots of violence in southern culture. Ciuba draws on the paradigm of mimetic violence developed by cultural and literary critic René Girard, who maintains that individual human nature is shaped by the desire to imitate a model. Mimetic desire may lead in turn to rivalry, cruelty, and ultimately community-sanctioned—and sometimes ritually sanctified—victimization of those deemed outcasts. Ciuba offers an impressively broad intellectual discussion that gives universal cultural meaning to the southern experience of desire, violence, and divinity with which these four authors wrestled and out of which they wrote. In a comprehensive analysis of Porter's semiautobiographical Miranda stories, Ciuba focuses on the prescribed role of women that Miranda imitates and ultimately escapes. O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away* reveals three characters whose scandalous animosity caused by religious rivalry leads to the unbearable stumbling block of violence. McCarthy's protagonist in *Child of God*, Lester Ballard, appears as the culmination of a long tradition of the sacred violence of southern religion, twisted into his own bloody faith. And Percy's *The Thanatos Syndrome* brings Ciuba's discussion back to the victim, in Tom Moore's renunciation of a society in which scapegoating threatens to become the foundation of a new social regime. From nostalgia for the old order to visions of a utopian tomorrow, these authors have imagined the interrelationship of desire, antagonism, and religion throughout southern history. Ciuba's insights offer new ways of reading Porter, O'Connor, McCarthy, and Percy as well as their contemporaries who inhabited the same culture of violence—violence desired, dreaded, denied, and deified. AUTHOR BIO: Gary M. Ciuba is the author of *Walker Percy: Books of Revelations* and numerous articles on modern southern fiction. He is a professor of English at Kent State University.

作者介绍:

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文艺理论

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# 评论

对美国南方暴力根源的讨论：凯瑟琳·安妮·波特，奥康纳，科马克·麦卡锡，沃克·珀西。吉拉德理论：the desire to imitate a model.对作品中的欲望、暴力和神性体验作普遍的文化层面意义解读。渴望暴力-恐惧暴力-否认暴力-神化暴力。

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