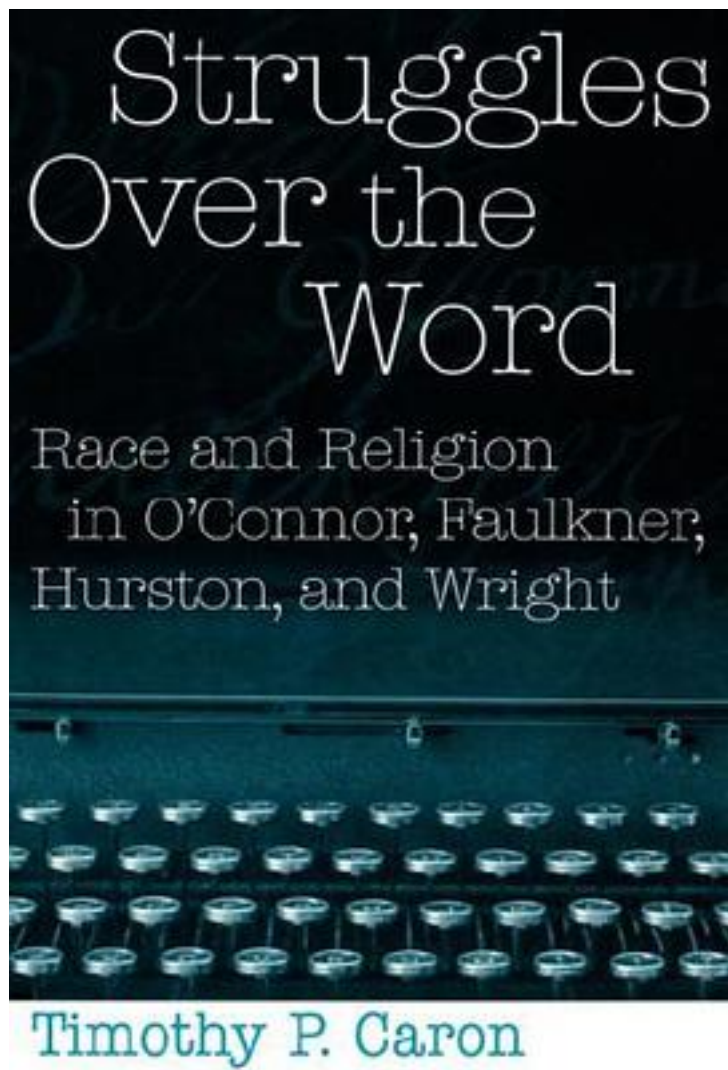


Struggles Over the Word



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This literary critical study counters the usual tendency to segregate Southern literature from African American literary studies. Noting that William Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor are classified as Southern writers, whereas Zora Neale Hurston and Richard Wright are considered black authors, Timothy P. Caron argues for "an integrated study of the South's literary culture". He shows that the interaction of Southern religion and race binds these four writers together. Caron broadens our understanding of Southern literature to include both white and African American voices. Analyzing O'Connor's *Wise Blood*, Faulkner's *Light in August*, Hurston's *Moses, Man of the Mountain*, and Wright's *Uncle Tom's Children*, Caron shows that these writers share an intertwined concern for issues of race and religion. These two significant components of Southern culture form the intertextual network that binds together such seemingly disparate texts. These authors not only interact among themselves in acknowledged and unacknowledged ways, but also with the South's discursive practices. Most particularly, Caron sees common "struggles over the Word", as he investigates how these writers use the Bible in their understandings of race and religion in the American South. While all four authors argue for the centrality of the Bible in both the black and white Southern experience, each offers a different view of how this iconic text has shaped Southern culture and its literature.

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