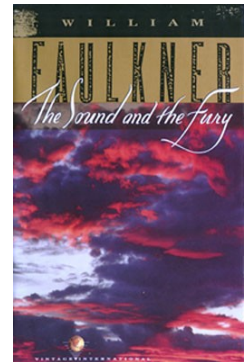
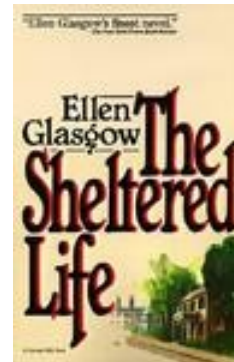
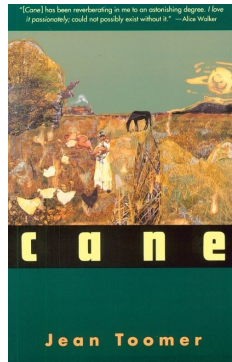


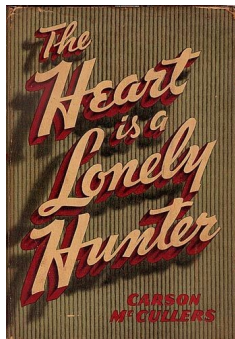
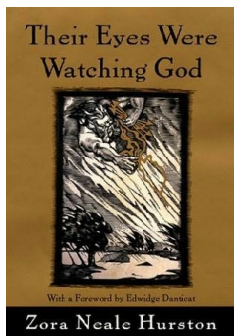
EN 4923/6923  
 Twentieth-Century American Novel  
*Selected Novels of the Southern Renaissance*

Dr. Ted Atkinson

Spring 2010  
 T.R. 12:30-1:45



For many years, scholarly consensus defined the Southern Renaissance as a flowering of letters in the U.S. South between World War I and World War II. According to this traditional approach, the Renaissance was sparked by the work of the Fugitives/Southern Agrarians, supremely exemplified in the fiction of William Faulkner, and enhanced by a host of other writers from Thomas Wolfe to Eudora Welty. Later scholars, however, took issue with the designated timeframe for the movement and with what they argued was an exclusionary process of canon formation. Informed by the triadic focus of critical theory on race, class, and gender, these scholars sought to expand the scope of both the traditional time period and the canon—or, in some cases, to question the conceptual validity of the “Southern Renaissance” altogether. One consequence of this revisionary enterprise was a broadening of the canon to include more African American and women writers, as well as practitioners of social realism during a burgeoning of class conscious and politically inflected writing in the Depression years.



This course will undertake a thorough examination of the Southern Renaissance as a distinctive literary movement. Focusing on selected novels—some of them traditional choices, others not—we will engage in close readings of texts and read them in relation to their historical and cultural contexts. Also, we will trace the concept of the “Southern Renaissance” in literary scholarship from the New Criticism to the New Southern Studies, exploring how it has played a crucial role in the process of “inventing southern literature,” to borrow critic Michael Kreyling’s phrase.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Toomer, *Cane*
- Glasgow, *The Sheltered Life*
- Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*
- Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
- McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*
- Smith, *Strange Fruit*
- Warren, *All the King's Men*
- Welty, *Delta Wedding*

