

Dr. Andrew Donnelly

MW 12:40-2:05pm

ENGL 4323: Southern Literature

What is the South to the nation? Is it different and exceptional, contradicting national ideals with stubborn or subversive narratives? Or is it the truth of the country, revealing its hidden, real identity? Who is the South? If it is diverse in its history and present, why is it reduced to stereotyped, stock characters? When is the South? Is it stuck in the past, and whose past, relative to what present?

In this course, we will look for answers (and the origins of these questions) in the literature of the US South, as it develops through the periods of slavery, the Civil War and Reconstruction, segregation and the Civil Rights Movement, and into the 21st-century. We'll look in particular to the South's foremost literary export, the Southern Gothic, as well as a range of Southern authors including Mark Twain, Harriet Jacobs, William Faulkner, Flannery O'Connor, Tennessee Williams, Randall Kenan, Jesmyn Ward, and others.