

WILLIAM FAULKNER AND THE MATERIALS OF WRITING

William Faulkner and the Materials of Writing examines the many physical texts in Faulkner's novels and stories from letters and telegrams to Bibles, billboards, and even the alphabetic shape of airport runways. Current investigations in print culture, book history, and media studies often emphasize the controlling power of technological form; instead, this book demonstrates how media should be understood in the context of its use. Throughout Faulkner's oeuvre, various kinds of writing become central to characters forming a sense of the self as well as bonds of intimacy, while ideologies of race and gender connect to the body through the vehicle of writing. This book combines close reading analysis of Faulkner's fiction with the publication history of his works that together offer a case study about what it means to live in a world permeated by media.

JONATHAN BERLINER received his PhD in English Language and Literature from the University of Chicago and served as an Andrew W. Mellon postdoctoral fellow at the University of Southern California. His work has been published in journals including *PMLA*, *American Literary Realism*, and *Amerikastudien / American Studies*.

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In many ways, this project began years ago at the University of Chicago when I came across birch bark booklets from the end of the nineteenth century created by the Potawatomi writer Simon Pokagon. Intrigued by these unusual items, I read everything I could about Pokagon and American Indian literature and culture, eventually meeting with members of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians who graciously provided insight otherwise unavailable in libraries. This research eventually came together as the fourth chapter of my dissertation. Two years later, *PMLA* published a version of this work as “Written in the Birch Bark: The Linguistic-Material Worldmaking of Simon Pokagon.” Only after I started teaching in Los Angeles did I begin to think about the many kinds of writing materials in Faulkner’s works; the analysis of these materials constitutes the heart of this study.

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