

CLASS, WHITENESS, AND SOUTHERN LITERATURE

Class, Whiteness, and Southern Literature explores the role that representations of poor white people play in shaping both middle-class American identity and major American literary movements and genres across the long twentieth century. Jolene Hubbs reveals that, more often than not, poor white characters imagined by middle-class writers embody what better-off people are anxious to distance themselves from in a given moment. Poor white southerners are cast as social climbers during the status-conscious Gilded Age, country rubes in the modern era, racist obstacles to progress during the civil rights struggle, and junk-food devotees in the health-conscious 1990s. Hubbs illuminates how Charles Chesnutt, William Faulkner, Flannery O'Connor, Dorothy Allison, and Barbara Robinette Moss swam against these tides, pioneering formal innovations with an eye to representing poor white characters in new ways.

JOLENE HUBBS is an associate professor of American Studies at the University of Alabama. She studies the literature and culture of the US South.

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JOLENE HUBBS

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Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-25065-8 — Class, Whiteness, and Southern Literature
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Frontmatter
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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
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314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
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www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009250658

DOI: 10.1017/9781009250627

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First published 2023

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

NAMES: Hubbs, Jolene, author.

TITLE: Class, Whiteness, and Southern literature / Jolene Hubbs.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York :

Cambridge University Press, 2023. | Series: Cambridge studies in American
literature and culture | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2022030487 (print) | LCCN 2022030488 (ebook) | ISBN 9781009250658
(hardback) | ISBN 9781009250641 (paperback) | ISBN 9781009250627 (epub)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: American literature—Southern States—History and criticism. | Authors, American—
Southern States—History. | Poor white people in literature. | White people in literature. |
Southern States—In literature. | Literature and society—United States—History. |
American literature—20th century—History and criticism.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC PS261 .H7857 2023 (print) | LCC PS261 (ebook) |
DDC 810.9/975—DC23/eng/20220718

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022030487>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022030488>

ISBN 978-1-009-25065-8 Hardback

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Acknowledgments

It gives me great joy to thank the mentors, colleagues, friends, and family members who have supported me during the years I spent researching and writing this book.

I first explored questions of literary form and poor white identity in my doctoral dissertation. I am incredibly grateful to my dissertation directors for their advice and support during my time at Stanford and in the years since then. Ramón Saldívar, unstintingly generous with his time and enthusiasm, was the kind of mentor I try to be to my own students. Paula Moya asked questions that continue to shape my approaches to literature. Gavin Jones was instrumental in helping me formulate a method for analyzing how American authors represent poverty. At Stanford I also benefited from working with Andrea Lunsford, Scott Bukatman, Bryan Wolf, and Sianne Ngai. Numberless hours reading and writing in Green Library alongside Mark Vega made my solitary labors less solitary. Jenna Lay has been asking the important questions – whether “What’s your argument here?” or “When did you last see your wallet?” – for the past two decades. Although I cannot reconcile myself to the fact that we are no longer roommates, I am happy to count her among my closest friends. A writing fellowship from Stanford’s Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE) provided me with essential support in finishing the dissertation as well as invaluable friendships with Matthew Daube, Jocelyn Lim Chua, and Doris Madrigal. The Mellon Foundation and Stanford’s Diversity Dissertation Research Opportunity Grant also supported my work on the dissertation, and a second appointment as a visiting scholar at CCSRE in 2016–2017 supported my work on this book.

At the University of Alabama, my scholarly labors have been buoyed by wonderful colleagues and friends. Among my stellar colleagues in the American Studies department, Lynne Adrian, Stacy Morgan, and Edward Tang deserve particular thanks for offering advice and support

throughout my years at UA. Historians Holly Grout and Jenny Shaw are savvy advisors and dear friends. Sharon O'Dair's feedback helped me become a better writer. Fred Whiting's kind invitations to many events made me feel like a member of a broader intellectual community at UA. I'm grateful, as well, for the Clarence Mondale Fellowship in American Studies and the Research Grants Committee Award, which funded my research for this book.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to two anonymous readers for Cambridge University Press whose generous and constructive responses to this manuscript aided me in clarifying and bolstering my arguments. Publishing with CUP has also afforded me the privilege of working with Leonard Cassuto and Ray Ryan. I heartily thank them both for their interest in this project and their expert guidance on the road from manuscript to book. Thanks to Edgar Mendez for answering many questions while I readied the manuscript for delivery. Thanks, as well, to Sam Arnold-Boyd for preparing the index and to Dr. Mark Reynolds for defraying its cost. I am also grateful to Paula Dragosh for reviewing the page proofs and to the Clarence C. Mondale American Studies Fund for supporting that work. An earlier version of part of the second chapter appeared as "William Faulkner's Rural Modernism" in *Mississippi Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (2008): 461–75. Thanks to the copyright owner, Mississippi State University, for permission to reprint. A portion of Chapter 4 appeared, in a different form, in the *Southern Literary Journal* 47, no. 2 (2015): 1–19. It is reprinted by permission of the copyright owners, the *Southern Literary Journal* and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Department of American Studies.

Thanks to Scotti Parrish for her feedback on my book proposal and to Sarah Allison, Chris Phillips, and Ellen Spears for showing me the ropes when it came time to reach out to presses. Countless conversations with Karen Maoki helped me refine my arguments and renew my excitement for this project. Han Yuan was an important part of my life from soon after this project began until shortly before I finished it, and I thank him for the ways he supported my scholarly work. I am grateful to Steve Tedeschi for coming into my life when the end of this book was in sight and cheering me across the finish line. Thanks to my parents, Jack and Jerrie Hubbs, and my siblings, Nancy, Jack, and Nadine, for their support. Nadine's comments on the introduction helped me better articulate the stakes of this project, and her encouragement and enthusiasm for my intellectual pursuits – from my first day of kindergarten to the present – mean a lot to me. Finally, thanks to Scripps College, my undergraduate alma mater, for awarding me the financial aid that made earning a bachelor's degree

Acknowledgments

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possible and for introducing me to an amazing mentor, Cheryl Walker, who first piqued my interest in southern literature.

Like Betsey Dole's poems in Mary E. Wilkins Freeman's story "A Poetess," which are "the love-letters that had passed between her and life," this book is a love letter to literary works that have uplifted me, caught me off guard, delighted me, puzzled me, and prompted me to read them again and again. It also conveys my deep regard for the cherished interlocutors whose responses to literature and life have informed, challenged, and enlivened my own.

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