

The Saddest Words: William Faulkner and the Civil War

When we think of renowned American novelist William Faulkner, his works often conjure images of gothic landscapes, complex characters, and profound exploration of the Southern United States. While he wrote about various themes throughout his career, one recurring motif that deeply impacted Faulkner's writing was the haunting shadow of the Civil War. In this article, we will delve into the profound impact of the Civil War on Faulkner's work and explore some of the saddest words he penned on this tragic era in American history.

The Darkened South: Faulkner's Southern Gothic

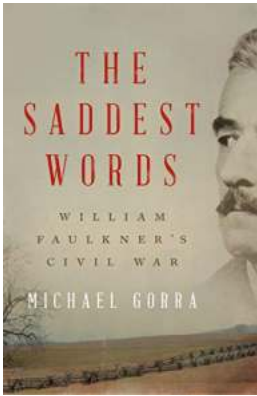
William Faulkner was born in 1897 in Mississippi, a state deeply scarred by the legacy of the Civil War. Growing up in this region, Faulkner felt a deep connection to the land and its history. His works were often set in the fictional county of Yoknapatawpha, which served as a microcosm of the post-Civil War South. Through his writing, Faulkner explored the decaying plantation culture, racial tensions, and the fading glory of the Old South.

Faulkner's characters in novels such as "The Sound and the Fury" and "Absalom, Absalom!" were deeply affected by the aftermath of the Civil War. They grappled with the loss of an identity, the burden of the past, and the shattered dreams of the Southern aristocracy. Faulkner's intricate storytelling and poetic prose vividly captured the collective melancholy and despair that reverberated across the South.

The Saddest Words: William Faulkner's Civil War

by Michael Edward Gorra (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5



Language	: English
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
File size	: 5700 KB
Screen Reader	: Supported
Print length	: 447 pages



The Tragic Consequences: Faulkner and the Cost of War

Through his writings, Faulkner explored the tragic consequences of war on the human psyche. The Civil War served as a backdrop for his characters' inner conflicts, portraying the emotional scars that war leaves behind. Faulkner's profound understanding of the human condition allowed him to depict the post-war struggles of individuals who had lost their loved ones, their homes, and their sense of purpose.

In "A Rose for Emily," one of Faulkner's most famous short stories, he explores the life of Miss Emily Grierson, a woman trapped in a world destroyed by war. The story is an allegory of the South's struggle to cope with the changing times and the loss of its former glory. Faulkner's masterful prose captures the essence of mourning and the isolation that engulfs those who are left behind.

The Sound of Silence: Faulkner's Narrative Style

Faulkner's unique narrative style adds an extra layer of poignancy to the saddest words he wrote about the Civil War. His stream-of-consciousness technique and non-linear storytelling allow for a deeper exploration of the characters' emotional

landscapes. By diving deep into their thoughts, fears, and regrets, Faulkner immerses his readers into a world of sorrow and longing.

One of his most notable works, "As I Lay Dying," portrays the Bundren family as they journey through the South to bury their deceased matriarch. Faulkner's use of multiple narrators, each with their own perspective and pain, creates a symphony of voices that reflects the shattered lives and fragmented society in the aftermath of the Civil War.

The Saddest Words: Faulkner's Legacy

William Faulkner's works continue to resonate with readers worldwide. His exploration of the Civil War's impact on the human spirit, his vivid portrayal of a post-war South, and his ability to convey the profound sense of loss have cemented his place in American literature. Faulkner's saddest words, often bathed in melancholy and despair, serve as a reminder of the tragic consequences of war and the resilience of the human spirit.

In , William Faulkner's writings on the Civil War are a testament to the lasting impact of this dark chapter in American history. Through his powerful storytelling and unforgettable characters, he immortalizes the pain, sorrow, and loss experienced during this time. Faulkner's saddest words serve as a poignant reminder of the human capacity to endure and find meaning even in the face of profound tragedy.

The Saddest Words: William Faulkner's Civil War

by Michael Edward Gorra (Kindle Edition)

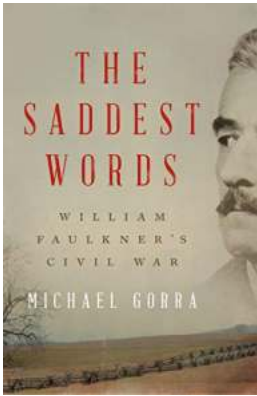
★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

X-Ray : Enabled



Word Wise : Enabled
File size : 5700 KB
Screen Reader : Supported
Print length : 447 pages



A New York Times Notable Book of 2020

How do we read William Faulkner in the twenty-first century? asks Michael Gorra, in this reconsideration of Faulkner's life and legacy.

William Faulkner, one of America's most iconic writers, is an author who defies easy interpretation. Born in 1897 in Mississippi, Faulkner wrote such classic novels as *Absalom, Absalom!* and *The Sound and The Fury*, creating in Yoknapatawpha county one of the most memorable gallery of characters ever assembled in American literature. Yet, as acclaimed literary critic Michael Gorra explains, Faulkner has sustained justified criticism for his failures of racial nuance—his ventriloquism of black characters and his rendering of race relations in a largely unreconstructed South—demanding that we reevaluate the Nobel laureate's life and legacy in the twenty-first century, as we reexamine the junctures of race and literature in works that once rested firmly in the American canon.

Interweaving biography, literary criticism, and rich travelogue, *The Saddest Words* argues that even despite these contradictions—and perhaps because of them—William Faulkner still needs to be read, and even more, remains central to

understanding the contradictions inherent in the American experience itself. Evoking Faulkner's biography and his literary characters, Gorra illuminates what Faulkner maintained was "the South's curse and its separate destiny," a class and racial system built on slavery that was devastated during the Civil War and was reimagined thereafter through the South's revanchism. Driven by currents of violence, a "Lost Cause" romanticism not only defined Faulkner's twentieth century but now even our own age.

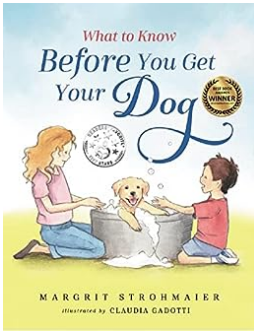
Through Gorra's critical lens, Faulkner's mythic Yoknapatawpha County comes alive as his imagined land finds itself entwined in America's history, the characters wrestling with the ghosts of a past that refuses to stay buried, stuck in an unending cycle between those two saddest words, "was" and "again." Upending previous critical traditions, *The Saddest Words* returns Faulkner to his sociopolitical context, revealing the civil war within him and proving that "the real war lies not only in the physical combat, but also in the war after the war, the war over its memory and meaning."

Filled with vignettes of Civil War battles and generals, vivid scenes from Gorra's travels through the South—including Faulkner's Oxford, Mississippi—and commentaries on Faulkner's fiction, *The Saddest Words* is a mesmerizing work of literary thought that recontextualizes Faulkner in light of the most plangent cultural issues facing America today.



Breaking Autism Barriers: A Father's Story

Autism is a complex disorder that affects millions of people worldwide. While there is no known cure for autism, there are ways to break down barriers and help those with...



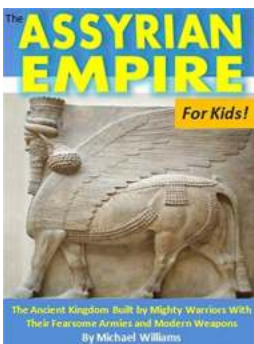
What To Know Before You Get Your Dog: Everything You Need to Consider

Getting a dog is an exciting and important decision. Dogs bring joy, companionship, and unconditional love to our lives. However, they also require a lot of responsibility...



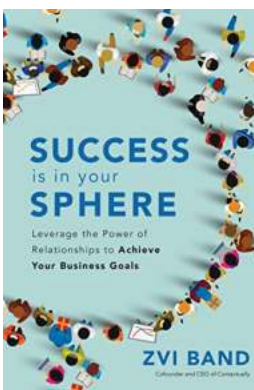
The Legend Of White Giorgi And Friends Giorgland Fables

Once upon a time in the magical land of Giorgland, there lived a young boy named White Giorgi. Known for his pure heart and unwavering courage, White Giorgi embarked...



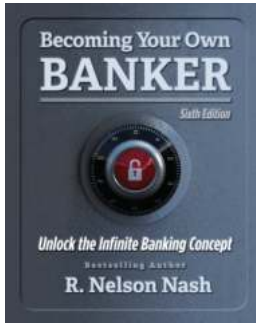
The Ancient Kingdom Built By Mighty Warriors With Their Fearsome Armies

The ancient world is filled with remarkable civilizations, each showcasing unique cultures, extraordinary architectural marvels, and astonishing military feats. One such...



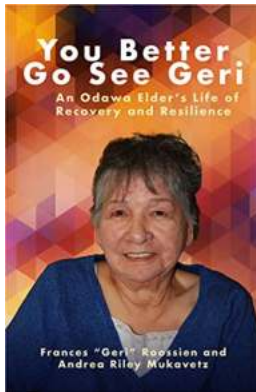
Success Is In Your Sphere: Unlocking the Power of Connections

When it comes to achieving success, many of us believe that hard work, intelligence, and talent are the most critical factors. While these qualities are undoubtedly important,...



Becoming Your Own Banker: Unleashing the Wealth-Generating Power of Nelson Nash's Infinite Banking Concept

Have you ever dreamed of becoming your own banker? Imagine the financial freedom and security that would come with having the ability to create your own source of capital,...



An Odawa Elder Life Of Recovery And Resilience

The Journey of an Odawa Elder: From Darkness to Resilience Life can be a tumultuous journey filled with ups and downs, triumphs and challenges. It becomes...



The Sweet Smell of Home: Exploring the Scents That Bring Comfort and Nostalgia

There's something special about the sweet smell of home. It's a fragrance that instantly takes us back to our most cherished memories and evokes a sense of comfort and...

the saddest words william faulkner's civil war