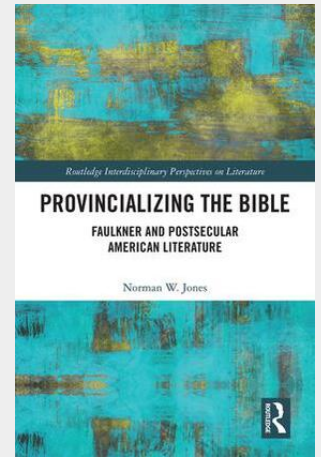


Jones

Provincializing the Bible

Faulkner and Postsecular American Literature

Why, in our supposedly secular age, does the Bible feature prominently in so many influential and innovative works of contemporary U.S. literature? More pointedly, why would a book indelibly allied with a long history of institutionalized oppressions play a supporting role—and not simply as an object of critique—in a wide variety of landmark literary representations of marginalized subjectivities? The answers to these questions go beyond mere playful re-appropriations or subversive resignifications of biblical themes, figures, and forms. This book shows how certain contemporary authors invoke the Bible in ways that undermine clear distinctions between "subversive" and "traditional"—indeed, that undermine clear distinctions between "secular" and "sacred." By tracing a key source of such complex literary invocations of the Bible back to William Faulkner's major novels, *Provincializing the Bible* argues that these literary works, which might be termed postsecular, ironically provincialize the Bible as a means of reevaluating and revalorizing its significance in contemporary American culture.



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