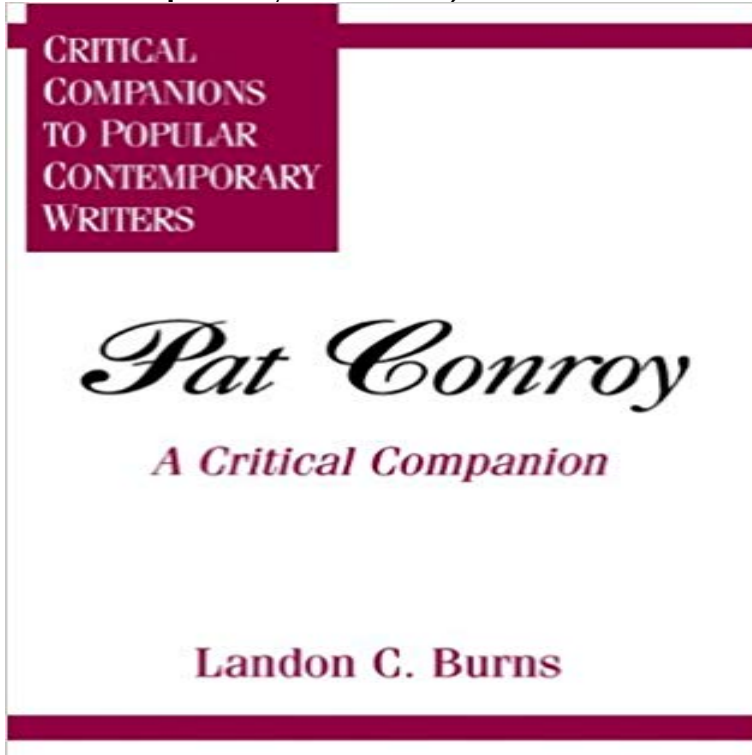


Pat Conroy: A Critical Companion (Critical Companions to Popular Contemporary Writers)



No one who has read Pat Conroy's novels of family wounds and healing can fail to be moved by their emotional appeal. But Conroy is also a major contemporary American novelist who follows in the tradition of Southern fiction established by William Faulkner and Thomas Wolfe. This companion is the first book-length study of his work. It explores the recurring motifs in his fiction and his special writing talents as a prose stylist of uncommon distinction. A separate chapter for *The Boo* and *The Water is Wide* and each novel? *The Great Santini*, *The Lords of Discipline*, *The Prince of Tides*, and his most recent, *Beach Music*? provides a detailed analysis of the books and the common threads that unite all the novels. A biographical chapter draws connections between Conroy's life and the autobiographical nature of his fiction. A chapter on genre traces Conroy's roots in southern fiction and shows how all the novels fall into the rite-of-passage genre. Each novel is analyzed for plot structure, characterization, thematic elements, and Conroy's increasingly elaborate style and development as a master of the art of the novel. In addition, Burns defines and applies a variety of alternative approaches to the novels to widen the readers' perspective. A complete bibliography of Conroy's fiction as well as selected reviews and criticism complete the work. Because of Pat Conroy's popularity among adults and teenagers, this first critical work of a major contemporary American writer is a necessary purchase by public and secondary school libraries.

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