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## Commemoration

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## Commemoration

Linda Flowers (November 8, 1944–January 21, 2000), child of tenant farmers in Duplin County, North Carolina, came into this world with a powerful native intelligence and wit that carried her successfully through youthful public education in her hometown of Faison, on to an undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and then to post-graduate degrees from Ohio State University (M.A.) and the University of Rochester (M.A., Ph.D.). A fellow at the Folger Library in Washington, D.C., in 1977, she arrived at North Carolina Wesleyan College in Rocky Mount in 1980, where she became professor of English, served as chairman of the English department, chairman of the faculty, and ran the Visiting Writers' Series, among much other service and leadership she gave to both college and community. She was on the executive committee of the North Carolina Humanities Council, and she was also a member of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.

Professor Flowers's funeral and burial were in Faison on January 23, and she was further eulogized in Russell Chapel at North Carolina Wesleyan on January 31. "Everything about her reflected and expressed her tenacious grasp upon this truth: that telling the truth matters," said one colleague at her funeral, adding, "not being polite, but telling the truth." At the Wesleyan service, another called her "the woman who loved the felicitously written word."

That we lost her too soon is a certainty, yet it is no less certain that her life was in every way exemplary, a triumph. Out of deep respect for this extraordinary person and in remembrance of her and her work, we offer here "Good Country People," the epilogue from her much-admired *Thrown Away: Failures of Progress in Eastern North Carolina*, which was published in 1993, and which is reprinted here courtesy of her publisher, the University of Tennessee Press.