# Contents

Acknowledgments vii

**Introduction** Tracing the Apocalyptic Imaginary 1

A Note on Structure 14

## PART I

**Chapter 1** Southern Jeremiad, American Jeremiad: Region, Nation, and Apocalypse in Faulkner's *Light in August* 21

“A walking pollution in God's own face”:  
The Apocalyptic Logic of Blood, Contamination, and Purity 24

The Apocalyptic Ritual of Lynching 37

“Lincoln and the negro and Moses and the children of Israel”:  
American Millenarianism and the Burden Narrative 44

Percy Grimm: Nationalizing the Southern Apocalyptic Imaginary 48

Modernism, the Cataclysm of Meaning, and the Possibility of Revelation 51

**Chapter 2** “Tearing Down the Temple”: Prophetic Time and Richard Wright's Eschatology of Resistance 61

“We git erlong widout time”:  
The Historical Condition of Jim Crow 66

Typology and the Apocalyptic Structure of Uncle Tom’s *Children* 77

Revising the Teleology:  
The Possibility of Rupture, Revelation, and Rebirth 85

Conclusion: Writing New Endings 95
PART II

Chapter 3  “Some Say Ain’t No Earthly Explanation”: Excavating the Apocalyptic Landscape of Randall Kenan’s Tims Creek

Tims Creek and the Eschatology of Place 104
Apocalypse as Alternative Discursive Space 111
The Possibility of Revelation: Excavating Apocalypse 120
The Uses of the Past 128

Chapter 4  “An’t It Time the Lord Did Something?”: Vindication and the Practices of Place in Bastard Out of Carolina

The Limits and Restraints of Southern Spaces 133
The Boatwrights’ Attempts at Narrative Resistance 138
The Alternative Narrative Space of Apocalypse 145

Epilogue  Apocalypse South, Redux — Searching for Meaning after the Flood

“Playing the Blame Game”:
Condemnation and Scapegoating after the Flood 156
Katrina and the (African) American Jeremiad 160
The Possibility of Revelation and Renewal 162
Justice, Deliverance, and Resistance 168

Bibliography 173
Index 182