

# Mark Royden Winchell

Editor of *Robert Penn Warren: Genius Loves Company*

Mark Royden Winchell was born on July 24, 1948. He holds the B. A. and M. A. degrees from West Virginia University and the Ph.D. from Vanderbilt. He has taught at the University of Tennessee, Nashville, the Ohio State University, the University of Southern Mississippi, and, since 1985, at Clemson University. He was promoted to full professor in 1988 and currently directs Clemson's program in the Great Works of Western Civilization.

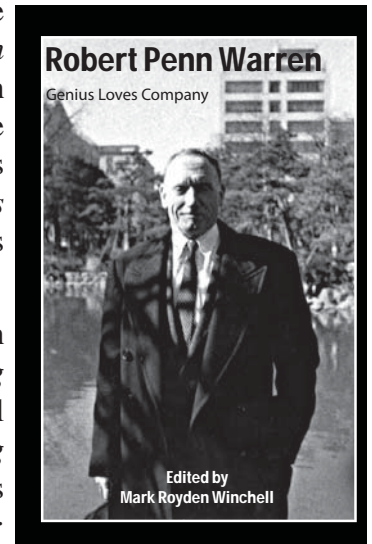
Winchell's publications include books on Joan Didion, William F. Buckley, Jr., Leslie Fiedler, and neoconservative criticism, all in Twayne's United States Authors Series, as well as monographs on Horace McCoy, John Gregory Dunne, and William Humphrey in the Boise State University Western Writers Series. His edited collection *The Vanderbilt Tradition: Essays in Honor of Thomas Daniel Young* was published by the Louisiana State University Press in 1991.

In 1988, Winchell's book *Talmadge: A Political Legacy, A Politician's Life* (written in collaboration with Herman E. Talmadge) was voted Georgia Biography of the Year by the Dixie Council of Authors and Journalists. In 1997, his book *Cleanth Brooks and the Rise of Modern Criticism* won the Robert Penn Warren / Cleanth Brooks Award, given annually by the Center for Robert Penn Warren Studies to the most distinguished book of literary criticism published in English during the previous year. All of the Warren images in Winchell's latest book, *Robert Penn Warren: Genius Loves Company*, were generously provided to the Clemson University Digital Press by the Center for Robert Penn Warren Studies at Bowling Green, KY.

His most recent books include the authorized biographies of Donald Davidson (2000) and Leslie Fiedler (2002) and a collection of essays called *Reinventing the South* (2006), all published by the University of Missouri Press. In 2007, Winchell and his wife Donna published a textbook anthology called *Ideas in Conflict: Writing about the Great Issues of Civilization* with Thomson Learning. He has two books forthcoming from the Intercollegiate Studies Institute--*God, Man, and Hollywood: Politically Incorrect Cinema from The Birth of a Nation to The Passion of the Christ* and *The Cause of Us All: Cultural Politics and the American South*.

Over the past quarter century, Winchell has published over 120 essays and reviews in such periodicals and books as *Modern Age*, the *Southern Review*, the *American Conservative*, the *Hollins Critic*, the *Mississippi Quarterly*, the *Canadian Review of American Studies*, the book section of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and the *History of Southern Literature*. His work appears frequently in the *Sewanee Review* and *Chronicles*, and he is a contributing editor to the *Southern Partisan*.

Winchell is director of the Institute for Southern History and Culture, a fellow of the Saint George Tucker Society, an associated scholar of the Abbeville Institute, and past president of both the South Atlantic chapter of the Council of Editors of Learned Journals and the South Carolina Association of Scholars. In 2001, he was named a distinguished alumnus of the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences of West Virginia University. In addition to editing twelve issues of the *South Carolina Review*, he was guest editor of a special country music issue of the *Southern Quarterly*, published in the spring of 1984. He is also a frequent participant in literary and professional conferences. He lives in Clemson, South Carolina, with his wife Donna and his sons Jonathan and Matthew.



# Robert Penn Warren

## *Genius Loves Company*

At least since the dawn of the Romantic era, it has been assumed that the poet lives a lonely life, isolated in his garret. Nevertheless, writers are not invariably hermits and misanthropes. As human beings, they crave the company of other human beings; as artists they need the stimulation of other artists. Norman Podhoretz once wrote that for Edmund Wilson, the Republic of Letters had “an existence at least as palpable and concrete as the Republic of France.”

In many ways, Robert Penn Warren was a model of the writer as social animal. As a precocious sixteen-year-old sophomore, he began attending meetings of Nashville’s Fugitive group. Decades before creative writing workshops had become a fixture on university campuses, these gifted amateurs would meet on alternate Saturday nights to exchange drafts of poems they were writing. The critical attention no doubt improved their verse, while the shared sense of community solidified their commitment to the literary life. Even a selective account [such as this] of Warren’s most important literary associations during such a long and active life could fill a good size book.



**Edited by**  
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