

WALKER PERCY is an essayist and novelist of distinction. Born in Birmingham, Alabama, he was reared in Alabama and Mississippi. He came to the University here for his Bachelor of Arts degree and went on to study medicine at Columbia University. Illness--from the point of view of belles lettres fortunate--caused him to retire from medicine and turn to writing. He has published essays on a wide range of topics; several of them have attracted notice and stimulated comment. His three published novels, however, have done most to bring luster to his literary career. The Moviegoer received the National Book Award for 1962. His second and third novels, The Last Gentleman and Love in the Ruins have brought added acclaim. In consequence, Mr. Percy has been himself increasingly the subject of scholarly investigation. Students here and in other institutions of higher learning now study him in their classes as an author who, through his interpretation of the South, transcends region and tradition to stand as a truly national literary figure. In short, Walker Percy is one of the leading novelists of America. This University is proud to honor this alumnus with the degree, Doctor of Letters.