



Colleen McCullough: A Critical Companion (Critical Companions to Popular Contemporary Writers)

Mary J. Demarr

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Although best known for *The Thorn Birds*, her blockbuster family saga set in her native Australia, Colleen McCullough is a versatile novelist who has written in a variety of genres. This is the first full-length examination of her work. It highlights her versatility and her refusal to be confined to any one genre or type of writing, even though that refusal has lost her part of the wide readership she gained with *The Thorn Birds*. DeMarr discusses, analyzes, and evaluates each of McCullough's eight novels in turn, relates it to the genre to which it belongs, and compares it to her other work. This study also features a biographical chapter and a chapter which discusses the variety of genres in which McCullough has written.

DeMarr shows how McCullough's romances (*Tim* and *The Ladies of Missalonghi*) and her other novels which make heavy use of romance elements (*The Thorn Birds* and *An Indecent Obsession*) differ dramatically from each other. She also compares McCullough's novels of ideas (*A Creed for the Third Millennium* and the three recent historical novels set in ancient Rome, *The Masters of Rome* series). Each novel or series is discussed in a separate chapter, which contains sections on plot development and structure, character development, setting, style, and themes. Each novel is also examined from an alternate critical approach, such as feminist, allegorical, anti-generic, and deconstructionist criticism, to widen the reader's perspective. A complete bibliography of McCullough's work, general criticism, and listings of reviews of each novel complete the work. This work will be of particular interest to public and school libraries.

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