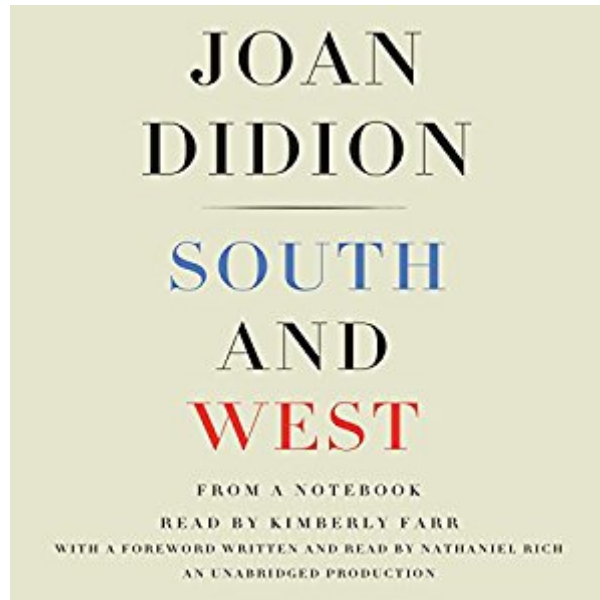




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South And West: From A Notebook



Synopsis

From the best-selling author of the National Book Award-winning *The Year of Magical Thinking*: two extended excerpts from her never-before-seen notebooks - writings that offer an illuminating glimpse into the mind and process of a legendary writer. Joan Didion has always kept notebooks - of overheard dialogue, observations, interviews, drafts of essays, and articles - and here is one such draft that traces a road trip she took with her husband, John Gregory Dunne, in June 1970, through Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. She interviews prominent local figures, describes motels, diners, a deserted reptile farm, a visit with Walker Percy, a ladies' brunch at the Mississippi Broadcasters' Convention. She writes about the stifling heat, the almost viscous pace of life, the sulfurous light, and the preoccupation with race, class, and heritage she finds in the small towns they pass through. And from a different notebook: the "California Notes" that began as an assignment from *Rolling Stone* on the Patty Hearst trial of 1976. Though Didion never wrote the piece, watching the trial and being in San Francisco triggered thoughts about the city, its social hierarchy, the Hearsts, and her own upbringing in Sacramento. Here, too, is the beginning of her thinking about the West, its landscape, the Western women who were heroic for her, and her own lineage, all of which would appear later in her acclaimed 2003 book *Where I Was From*. One of Time's most anticipated books of 2017 One of The New York Times Book Review's "What You'll Be Reading in 2017"

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Are you a dyed in the wool Didion fan? If you are, you will likely love this book. Didion has really published a set of notes rather than a book. If you are not a fan, don't bother because you won't "get it".

This seemed like she just threw together notes from a long ago trip. The problem is I love her writing, it is amazing. I will keep reading her books but will not recommend this one

I'm a Joan Didion fan from long ago. Reading this on my ipad was a bit different but the book itself was just as different. An interesting read. Totally Didion.

Sadly this is not a book - it is a tirade. I am a big fan of Joan. Her ability to describe a time and place is uncanny. I think she is one of our foremost authors, BUT these few old notes from a visit she made to the South are down right weird!. All this talk of darkness and snakes and death. I was born and raised in New Orleans and lived there until my 30's. Obviously, she hated it. I wish she could have taken a few days to look around the town and met a few more people. (Just for the record - there are no scorpions in the banana trees!) What a disappointment.

Joan Didion's reporting from the deep south in the 70's feels like an intimate conversation one might have inside one's head while simultaneously broadcasting a message that everyone needs to hear.

It's Joan Didion. Excellent as always.

I would read JD's grocery lists but I really expected more from this book. As previous reviewers said, it's really just a collection of her notes, which are much more penetrating than most people's writing. But the book's introduction laid out an idea -- that the political conflict in the US right now can be traced back to unresolved conflicts in the South. I really really wanted to read JD's thinking and writing about this -- no one better to do it, I thought -- but it didn't deliver.

short and sweet- palatable Didion

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