



Bottomland: A Novel Based on the Murder of Rosa Mary Dean in Franklin, Tennessee

Trey Holt

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A new Southern Gothic novel that will appeal to fans of William Faulkner, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* . . .

Based on actual events, **Bottomland** is the story of the murder of a young woman in Franklin, Tennessee. Set in 1953, it explores the social mores of the town itself and the personalities of all involved, from the townspeople, to the police, to the killers.

Told from the perspective of a 17-year-old high school senior who has just fallen in love for the first time, **Bottomland** reflects Franklin's evolution from the Civil War through World War II and segregation, while chronicling the narrator's family history and coming of age. The story unfolds over the four day period during which the the body and the perpetrators remain unidentified.

Reviewers say:

"Holt's character-work is first-class, and his clever, authentic-sounding Southern dialogue is full of life and character... Beautiful, evocative descriptive passages drift through the narrative. He also has a great talent for quick, memorable character sketches... As a true-crime buff, I'd never heard of the real-life case this is based on before.... There is surprisingly little [that has been written about the case] beyond Holt's splendid book." --*The Reader in the Tower* blog

"This remarkable, intricately crafted novel is clearly not for everyone. I can see why after a body is discovered many people would go in mystery mode, but that isn't what this is. Nor is it a book that maintains an easily understood story line; at times I wasn't exactly sure which time period we were in but as it turns out that just contributed to the overall effect. Instead, **it is a story from the mind of a teenage boy of great sensitivity, caught between a host of conflicting forces, and emerging from it with a deepened sense of the meaning of life and its tragedies.** The characters all arise out of the very Southern soil of Franklin, Tennessee, but for all that they represent a wide spectrum of human experience. The use of his mentally ill uncle to bring reflections on the human conditions is brilliant. As in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and Shakespeare's *King Lear*, the 'fool' is often the one with the deepest insights. We as readers are, to be sure, asked to stay with this story amidst its many complicated tangles, but it is a journey well worth taking. It is the sort of book I'd like to read again, only this time with a group of friends to discuss the journey along the way. I think we would all learn much about ourselves and each other." --Karl Frederickson, Amazon.com reader review

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From reader reviews:

Celia Redmond:

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