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"When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign, that the dunces are all in a confederacy against him."

— Jonathan Swift

(epigraph to *A Confederacy of Dunces*)

A Confederacy of Dunces

A Novel by John Kennedy Toole

Foreword by Walker Percy



A Confederacy of Dunces was written by a young man who killed himself in 1969 at age 32. For many years after his death, his mother searched and finally found a champion for her son's manuscript, none less than novelist Walker Percy.

"There are readers — and I am one — who keep calm in the face of the stormiest comic novels. Wit, farce, satire, nonsense: I may be vastly tickled but I do not laugh out loud. Till now. To the charms of John Kennedy Toole's *A Confederacy of Dunces* I succumbed, vocal with delight."

— *The New York Times Book Review*, Alan Friedman
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