



Instinct for Survival: Essays

Pat C., II Hoy

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The essays in *Instinct for Survival* explore fundamental ideas about the ties of community, the trials and tribulations of family life, the sacrificial nature of public service, the yearnings of the spirit, and the tangled joys of teaching. From his childhood in Arkansas to his career as both Army officer and professor of literature, Pat Hoy uses his rich experiences as departure points in his quest for meaning.

In "Mosaics of Southern Masculinity," Hoy recalls his absent father and develops a multilayered inquiry into male identity that includes memories of his own sons and reflections on the ways other southern writers have grappled with father-son relationships. "The Spirit Was Willing and So Was the Flesh" stems from Hoy's attempts to come to terms with the feminine aspects of his own personality and with the apparent dichotomy between the spiritual and the physical. Hoy toys with his own personal poetics and philosophy of writing in "Conversing with Images," where he articulates the unspoken power of images. A fascination with life's mysteries informs these essays, which together create a transcendent and marvelous mosaic of life.

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