

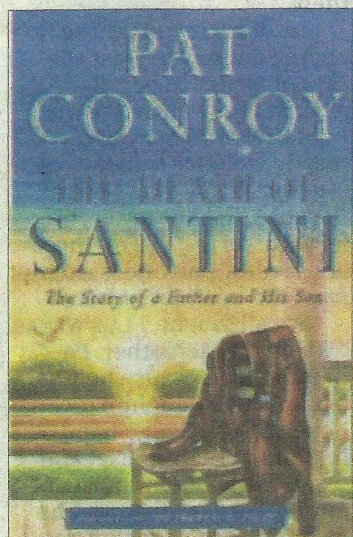
BOOKS

This fall: a bio, memoirs, novels

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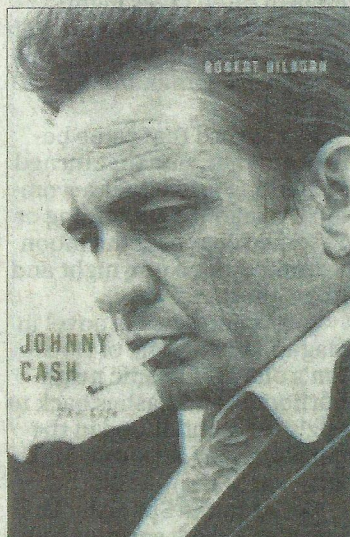
Bull Meecham is the heroic fighter pilot and brutal father at the center of "The Great Santini," the novel by Atlanta native **Pat Conroy**. As most everyone knows, the character was based on Conroy's father. In the author's latest book, a memoir called "The Death of Santini" (Oct. 29, Random House), the bigger-than-life figure appears again, but this time under his real name, Donald Conroy. Based on advance buzz, Conroy senior became a somewhat kinder, gentler version of his former self in his later years. It is one of the most highly anticipated books this fall for fans of Southern literature.

But it has some competition. Also eagerly anticipated is "Men We Reaped" (Sept. 17, Bloomsbury), a memoir by 2011 National Book Award winner **Jesmyn Ward** about the death of her brother and four



Big fall releases include "The Death of Santini," by Pat Conroy, and "Johnny Cash: The Life," by Robert Hilburn. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

other young men trapped in a cycle of poverty, racism and drugs in rural Mississippi. Virginia native **Lee Smith** returns to her favorite environs, the North Carolina mountains, with "Guests on Earth" (Oct. 15, Algonquin), the story of a teenage piano prodigy



who's sent to a mental institution in Asheville where she befriends F. Scott Fitzgerald's wife, Zelda.

It started as a 77-minute audiobook essay released earlier this year by **Ann Patchett**, but now "This is the Story of a Happy Marriage" (Nov.

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Get ready for the Book Festival of the MJCCA with our interview with Pat Conroy and an excerpt from Lily Koppel's "The Astronaut Wives Club" at MyAJC.com/artspreview.

5, Harper) is the name of a collection of personal essays about the author's life, past and present. In addition to the original piece about her journey to marital bliss, there are essays about a less fortunate marriage and the joys of running her bookstore in Nashville.

Los Angeles Times music critic Robert Hilburn promises to tell the candid truth about the man in black in "Johnny Cash: The Life" (Oct. 29, Little, Brown & Co.). From the Folsom Prison concert in 1968 to interview sessions held the year Cash died in 2003, Hilburn had intimate access to the musician over the years, which he mines in this 688-page opus.