

## **Frazier, Charles** <sup>[1]</sup>

### **Charles Frazier**

**1950 -**

by T. Mike Childs  
[NC Government & Heritage Library](#) <sup>[2]</sup>, 2012.

Charles R. Frazier, born November 4, 1950 in [Asheville](#) <sup>[3]</sup>, North Carolina, is a best-selling and award-winning novelist.



Publicity photo of Charles Frazier from Random House, circa 2006.

<sup>[4]</sup>

Frazier's childhood was spent in the small western North Carolina towns of Andrews and Franklin, but it was the mountain near his grandparents, Cold Mountain in Pisgah National Forest, that gave him the title of his first novel.

He received his bachelor's degree from the [University of North Carolina](#) <sup>[5]</sup> at Chapel Hill in 1973 and his M.A. in English at [Appalachian State University](#) <sup>[6]</sup> in Boone, N.C. in 1975. Frazier met his wife Katherine at ASU, and married her in 1976. Frazier's first work was a textbook, *Developing Communication Skills for the Accounting Profession*, co-written with Robert Ingram and published in 1980. Before completing his doctorate in American literature at the University of South Carolina in 1986, he traveled and co-wrote a Sierra Club travel guide, *Adventuring in the Andes*, published in 1985, the same year his daughter Annie was born.

Frazier taught briefly at the [University of Colorado](#) <sup>[7]</sup> at Boulder before moving back to North Carolina where he and his wife both taught at [North Carolina State University](#) <sup>[8]</sup>. His wife convinced him to quit his job teaching English at NCSU and work full-time on his novel. His friend and fellow North Carolina novelist, [Kaye Gibbons](#) <sup>[9]</sup>, showed his unfinished novel to her literary agency which resulted in the publication of *Cold Mountain* <sup>[10]</sup> in 1997.

The plot is based on a family story about his great-great uncle, Confederate soldier William P. Inman, and his journey home during the Civil War. *Cold Mountain* sold millions of copies, spent weeks on the New York Times best sellers list, and won the 1997 National Book Award for fiction. In 2003, a [successful film adaptation](#) <sup>[11]</sup> of the book was released, which garnered seven Academy Award nominations, and an Oscar for Renée Zellweger, who won the award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role.

In 2002, the publishing company Random House paid Frazier an eight million dollar advance for the rights to his second novel. *Thirteen Moons*, a historical epic about the North Carolina Cherokee, was published in 2006. Frazier partnered with the [Museum of the Cherokee Indian](#) <sup>[12]</sup> to launch the Yonaguska Literature Initiative to preserve the Cherokee language and create a Cherokee-language translation of *Thirteen Moons*, and other contemporary works.

In 2008, he received the [North Carolina Award](#) <sup>[13]</sup> for literature.

Frazier's third novel, *Nightwoods*, set in 1960s North Carolina, was published in 2011. Its heroine is Luce, a woman suddenly responsible for her murdered sister's children while a caretaker for an aging Appalachian lodge.

Frazier currently resides on a farm near Raleigh where he continues to write and raise show horses.

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## Additional Resources:

"Charles Frazier: Nightwoods." *North Carolina Bookwatch*. Season nine. Episode 20. Directed by Will Mikes. Aired October 21, 2011.

"DG Martin talks with author Charles Frazier about the historic Inman Chapel his great-grandfather established." *North Carolina Now*. Directed by Shannon Vickery. Aired August 22, 2011.

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"Inman Chapel." N.C. Highway Historical Marker P-90, N.C. Office of Archives & History.

## Image Credit:

Bray, Phil. Photograph of Charles Frazier. Random House website.  
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## Subjects:

Biographies [26]

Novelists [27]

Writers, journalists, and editors [28]

## Authors:

Childs, T. Mike [29]

## Origin - location:

Mountains [30]

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23 March 2012 | Childs, T. Mike

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