

PRAISE FOR
JULIA FOWLER'S FIRST BOOK,
Talk Southern to Me:

"I love all things Southern... and I really love Julia Fowler's new book *Talk Southern to Me*. I know you'll love it, too. It's fun, informative, and oh-so-Southern."

♥ Dolly Parton

"I'm proud to share the sisterhood of the South with my dear friend Julia Fowler. Her humor and intelligence shine through everything she does, including the pages of this most entertaining book."

♥ Patricia Altschul

AUTHOR OF *THE ART OF SOUTHERN CHARM*
AND STAR OF BRAVO'S HIT REALITY SERIES
SOUTHERN CHARM

"*Talk Southern to Me* is a hilarious, wise, and winning explanation of the heart and soul of the South, written by one of its most beloved—and lovable—daughters. As a longtime fan of Julia Fowler's brilliantly funny Southern Women Channel on YouTube, I have pined for a print version of her sassy Southern storytelling to share with friends and here it is! Get you some."

♥ Celia Rivenbark

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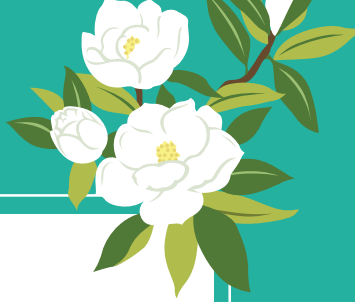
JULIA
FOWLER



GIBBS
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Embrace Your Southern, Sugar!

JULIA FOWLER
AUTHOR OF *TALK SOUTHERN TO ME*



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Embrace **Comin'** **and** **Goin'**



Comin' and Goin'

“Hey, Sugarbritches!”

SOUTHERNERS ARE NOT STEALTHY CREATURES. You can hear us coming from a mile away.

“Well, fry my feet and call 'em drumsticks! Lookahere what the cat drug in! Mercy days, I haven't seen you since you were knee high to a grasshopper! Let me hug your neck, darlin'. [Insert neck hug.] Lord, look at you all grown up and prettier than a pie supper. How's your Mama and 'nem?” This is a standard Southern greeting. This is part of Southern hospitality. No matter where you go in the South, you'll find that we Southerners take our time. We take our time with meals, on Sunday afternoon drives, and especially in conversation. You could paint an entire house in the amount of time it takes a Southerner to say, “Hello.”

But a proper Southerner would never just say, “Hello.” How tacky. And as I explained in my previous book, there's nothing tackier than being tacky. You will never catch a Southerner saying, “Hi, how are you guys?” Or “Hello, you all.” No. No. No. “Hey, y'all!” is the customary way to greet a group of folks in the South. And when greeting an individual, you can bet your Granny's china we're gonna lavish you with a honeysuckled term of endearment like, “Hey, sweet pea!” “Hey honey pie!” or “Hey, sugar!” Southerners spit more sugar out of their mouths than a Dixie Crystals sugar shaker.

After drizzling you with a honeyed “Heeeeeey,” a Southerner then feels compelled to qualify their enthusiasm and surprise at bumping into you with phrases like, “Well, cut off my legs and call me shorty! Running into you makes me happier than a pup with two tails. How are yewwwww?” Then, of course, a full-fledged chewing-the-fat session follows, which can take forevah and evah. Growing up, I had to take a sleeping bag with me in case my Mama ran into somebody she knew at the grocery store. If they gave an Olympic gold medal for talking, Mama would be on a box of Wheaties. But she can't help it. Her Mama, my Granny Winnie, could also talk the ears off a hobby horse. She had a vivacious personality and always made a big show out of greeting folks. Like most Southerners, Granny Winnie never met a stranger.

I was raised by these Southern women, so I also spew saccharine salutations and have long-winded conversations with people I run into. And I've been trained like a dog to speak to people I don't know because Mama insists “it's the polite thing to do.” But this sort of wild and crazy behavior will elicit some serious sideways glances outside of the South. When you flash a toothy smile to a stranger in New York City and say, “Hey, how are yewwwww?” it confuses them and makes them suspicious. They tend to clutch their purse or slink away assuming you are coo-coo-ca-choo. So, this became my favorite game when I lived in NYC. I would trudge through the crowded city streets and attempt to get the miserable, black-clad, rushed souls to smile and return my enthusiastic greetings. I considered it a victory both for myself and Southern culture if I could score even one toothless grin.

After moving to Los Angeles, I learned that people on the West Coast don't really take time to properly greet each other either.

The Dadblame Weather

“We’re fixin’ to get a frog strangler.”

THERE ARE SOME FOLKS YOU JUST CAN’T TRUST in life. Mother Nature is one of ‘em. Do not trust her any farther than you can throw her. She’s slicker than a pocket full of puddin’! You just never know what this crazy woman’s gonna do, especially in the South. Ice storm in April, hurricane in May, July 4th tornado, 70 degree Christmas—I’m tellin’ ya, she’s crazier than a sack full of house cats! Her only predictable quality is her unpredictability. But if you live in the South, you must learn to embrace Mother Nature the same way you learn to embrace a difficult mother-in-law: with fear and respect—and plenty of wine. The South has always had extreme weather, and as global temperatures rise, the weather is only getting more erratic. But because we’re prideful people, Southerners have long considered it a badge of honor to be able to withstand such inhumane conditions.

HURRICANES

As I’m writing this essay, tropical storm Barry is moving through the Gulf and is expected to hit southeast Louisiana and southwest Mississippi. The National Hurricane Center is predicting twenty inches of rain and a life-threatening storm surge. My dear friend Delaine is from Louisiana, so I started texting and calling her early this morning, as I am worried about her and her family. Hours later, Delaine *finally* sent me a text: “Sorry I couldn’t pick up the phone

earlier, darlin’. I’m at a hurricane party. Can’t talk. Too loud.” Then she texted me a picture from the party. Looked like a picture from a Mardi Gras party—full of toothy grins and booze.

Now, don’t get me wrong. Louisianans fully understand the danger. They make preparations. They are old pros at hurricanes. But when they don’t feel the threat is high enough to evacuate, the only reasonable thing to do is throw a neighborhood hurricane party and whip out the fine china and crystal. Hurricane-force winds are no excuse for inelegance. Obviously, hurricanes are extremely tragic, but a Southerner’s reaction to a hurricane can be so funny that I actually made an entire YouTube video on the subject called *Sh%t Southern Women Say In A Hurricane*.

If you live in the coastal South, hurricanes are simply a way of life. You take the risk and become skillful at preparing so you can live in a place that speaks to your soul like no other place on earth. Folks in California make the same trade-off living in earthquake country. They trade in their fear for the gorgeous year-round weather that defines Southern California. I reluctantly moved to Los Angeles due to my husband’s career and wasn’t initially concerned about earthquakes. Then I felt my first one. It scared the bejesus outta me. I didn’t know whether to scratch my watch or wind my butt. I am now well-versed in earthquake protocol, but this has done absolutely nothing to mitigate my earthquake anxiety. My Southern nature is accustomed to predictable forces of nature, like hurricanes and tornadoes and two inches of snow. Forces one can prepare for. Let’s just say my prayers now regularly include, “Dear Lord, please don’t let me die in an earthquake . . . or sitting on the toilet.”

Your Southern Fried Palate

“Jeet yet?”

DOWN SOUTH, THE TEA IS SWEET but the server is even sweeter. That’s because food is the ultimate form of Southern hospitality. New to the neighborhood? Somebody’s gonna make you a peach pie. Christmas time? Somebody’s gonna make you divinity candy. Your daddy just drop dead? The whole dadgum town’s gonna bring you a casserole.

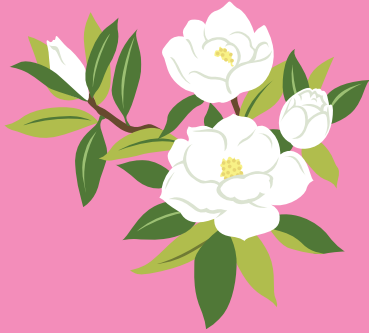
Eating is a form of art in the South. Southerners are offended by people who whine, “I’m not hungry.” The only acceptable excuse for refusing food is that your jaw is wired shut. And even then, somebody’s gonna take pity on your medical condition and bring you a freshly blended chicken and dumplin’ shake to sip on.

Southerners show their deepest affection by feeding you fabulous, home-cooked meals from family recipes passed down through the generations. Where you are in the South determines what you eat. Sure, there are standard Southern recipes every Southern cook knows, but some foods are specific to Southern regions. If you’re in the South Carolina low country, you’ll find yourself slurping up she-crab soup. In Louisiana you’re certain to chow down on jamba-

laya. Texans are likely to smother their chicken-fried steak in red-eye gravy while a Tennessean is likely to smother it in cream gravy. Every Southerner is convinced their way of preparing a classic Southern recipe is best. We’re extremely judgmental about food. “Who made the tea?” is Southern for, “This tea is not fit to drink.” We’ll passionately argue for hours over how sweet tea should be or which state has the best BBQ but there’s one thing all Southerners agree on—food equals love.

Based on this equation, I grew up with more love than one gal should ever receive. My entire Southern history rests on the tip of my tongue, because most of my memories are associated with food. Churning homemade ice cream reminds me of care-free summer days playing with my cousins in Uncle Jimmy and Aunt Linda’s pool. Every single time I crack open a crab leg, I find myself telling the story of how, when I was as a child, my Uncle Larry taught me to expertly eat crab legs in Myrtle Beach. Thanks to Uncle Larry I can order crab legs in a fancy restaurant and eat them elegantly—a skill that never ceases to impress. And Uncle Larry always makes my grandparents’ cornbread dressing recipe

**The only
acceptable
excuse for
refusing food
is that
your jaw is
wired shut.**



**If I'd known
you were
coming
I'd a fixed
a cake!**

*Ewww... that tastes so bad
it'd make a buzzard puke.*

I'm 'bout to bust a gut!

*I'm full as a tick
on a ten-day suck.*

Stick a fork in me, I'm done.

*Always be aware when
you've had a gracious plenty.*

SOUTHERN REMEDIES

Abrasions: Zinc Oxide-soaked gauze, red oil

Age spots: Apply buttermilk, rinse after 20 minutes

Agitation: Catnip tea

Anxiety: Sassafras tea

Arthritis: Red oil or emu oil

Bee stings: Tobacco

Boils: Raw fatback

Burns: Aloe plant, red oil, or Zinc Oxide-soaked gauze

Chigger bites: Fingernail polish

Clean ear canals: Hydrogen Peroxide

Colds: Boil water, honey, lemons, and fresh ginger; add whiskey to taste

Bake half an onion and drink the juice

Rock candy and moonshine

Homemade chicken bone broth

Constipation: Prunes

Cuts and bruises: Apply turmeric powder or red oil

Diaper rash: Previously occupied dirt dauber's nest ground down to fine powder

Dry skin, lips, cuticles, nails: Olive oil

Earaches: Place garlic clove in ear (do not shuck) or sweet oil

Gout: Eat cherries

Hair product buildup: Wash hair with a tablespoon of baking soda

Hair conditioner: Mayonnaise on the ends, then rinse well

Headaches: Ice or vinegar-soaked cloth

Hemorrhoids: Witch hazel

Hiccups: Spoonful of honey, or turn upside down and drink water

Hypertension: Eat garlic or drink diluted apple cider vinegar

Indigestion: Mix 1/2 teaspoon baking soda in water and drink

Insomnia: Lavender oil or lavender tea

Joint pain: Green tea, red oil, or emu oil

Kidney stones: Drink lemon juice daily

Memory loss: Sage leaf extract

Nausea: Ginger tea or ginger ale

Nasal congestion: Eucalyptus oil

Puffy eyes: Cold tea bags or cold cucumbers

Razor burn: Mashed avocados on skin

Respiratory ailments: Place an onion and mustard poultice on chest

Ringworm: Soak copper pennies in vinegar and apply solution to skin 2-3 times a day

Skin ailments: Colloidal oatmeal bath

Sore throat: Gargle with salt water

Sore muscles: Red oil, peppermint oil, or eucalyptus oil

Stomachaches: Yellow root tea

Sty: Drop of colloidal silver

Toothaches: Mix clove oil with olive oil and apply

Urinary tract infections: Cranberry juice

Warts: Cover with duct tape

Whiten teeth: Brush with baking soda

Wounds: Red oil

Yeast infections: Dead sea salt bath

Zits: Tea tree oil

Disclaimer: I am not a trained physician, y'all. Please consult your doctor before trying any of these remedies for your ailments.