



The Oxford Handbook of American Literary Naturalism (Oxford Handbooks)

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After its heyday in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, naturalism, a genre that typically depicts human beings as the product of biological and environmental forces over which they have little control, was supplanted by modernism, a genre in which writers experimented with innovations in form and content. In the last decade, the movement is again attracting spirited scholarly debate. *The Oxford Handbook of American Literary Naturalism* takes stock of the best new research in the field through collecting twenty-eight original essays drawing upon recent scholarship in literary and cultural studies. The contributors offer an authoritative and in-depth reassessment of writers from Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, Theodore Dreiser, and Jack London to Kate Chopin, Edith Wharton, Ernest Hemingway, Richard Wright, John Steinbeck, Joyce Carol Oates, and Cormac McCarthy. One set of essays focus on the genre itself, exploring the historical contexts that gave birth to it, the problem of definition, its interconnections with other genres, the scientific and philosophical ideas that motivate naturalist authors, and the continuing presence of naturalism in twenty-first century fiction. Others examine the tensions within the genre—the role of women and African-American writers, depictions of sexuality, the problem of race, and the critique of commodity culture and class. A final set of essays looks beyond the works to consider the role of the marketplace in the development of naturalism, the popular and critical response to the works, and the influence of naturalism in the other arts.

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