



Masculinity in Contemporary New York Fiction (Routledge Transnational Perspectives on American Literature)

Peter Ferry

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Masculinity in Contemporary New York Fiction is an interdisciplinary study that presents masculinity as a key thematic concern in contemporary New York fiction. This study argues that New York authors do not simply depict masculinity as a social and historical construction but seek to challenge the archetypal ideals of masculinity by writing counter-hegemonic narratives.

Gendering canonical New York writers, namely Paul Auster, Bret Easton Ellis, and Don DeLillo, illustrates how explorations of masculinity are tied into the principal themes that have defined the American novel from its very beginning. The themes that feature in this study include the role of the novel in American society; the individual and (urban) society; the journey from innocence to awareness (of masculinity); the archetypal image of the absent and/or patriarchal father; the impact of homosocial relations on the everyday performance of masculinity; male sexuality; and the male individual and globalization.

What connects these contemporary New York writers is their employment of one of the great figures in the history of literature: the flâneur. These authors take the flâneur from the shadows of the Manhattan streets and elevate this figure to the role of self-reflexive agent of male subjectivity through which they write counter-hegemonic narratives of masculinity. This book is an essential reference for those with an interest in gender studies and contemporary American fiction.



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