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This ambitious literary history traces the American novel from its emergence in the late eighteenth century to its diverse incarnations in the multi-ethnic, multi-media culture of the present day. In a set of original essays by renowned scholars from all over the world, the volume extends important critical debates and frames new ones. Offering new views of American classics, it also breaks new ground to show the role of popular genres - such as science fiction and mystery novels - in the creation of the literary tradition. One of the original features of this book is the dialogue between the essays, highlighting cross-currents between authors and their works as well as across historical periods. While offering a narrative of the development of the genre, the History reflects the multiple methodologies that have informed readings of the American novel and will change the way scholars and readers think about American literary history.

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The Cambridge History of the American Novel From Cambridge University Press Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #2119553 in Books
- Published on: 2011-04-29
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.98" h x 2.36" w x 5.98" l, 4.64 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 1272 pages

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Review

'... an innovative approach that is bound to prove as stimulating as the best of American fiction already does.'
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