

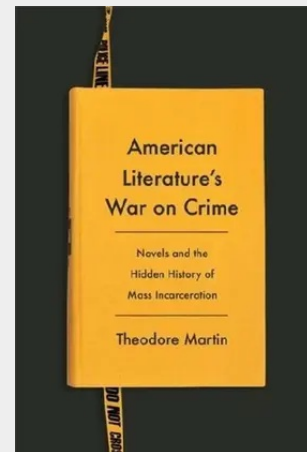
Martin

American Literature's War on Crime

Novels and the Hidden History of Mass Incarceration

While the United States was building the world's largest prison system, Americans were reading crime novels. What did it mean to read crime fiction in a "tough-on-crime" era? How were fictional stories about crime linked to cultural narratives about criminality, class, and race? What did novels have to do with the making of mass imprisonment in America? Theodore Martin offers a groundbreaking account of the ways that reading habits and crime politics intersected in the age of mass incarceration. He shows how the War on Crime was waged on the page, arguing that fiction made the policies and ideologies of crime control legible to diverse readerships. *American Literature's War on Crime* analyzes dozens of novels—from best-sellers and prize winners to cult classics and forgotten mass-market paperbacks—by authors including Mary Higgins Clark, James Ellroy, Ralph Ellison, Donald Goines, Sue Grafton, Patricia Highsmith, Chester Himes, Stephen King, Walter Mosley, and Sister Souljah. Rewriting the history of one of the past century's most popular genres, this ambitious book reveals how the rise of mass incarceration transformed American crime fiction—and how crime fiction became a key battleground in the War on Crime.

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