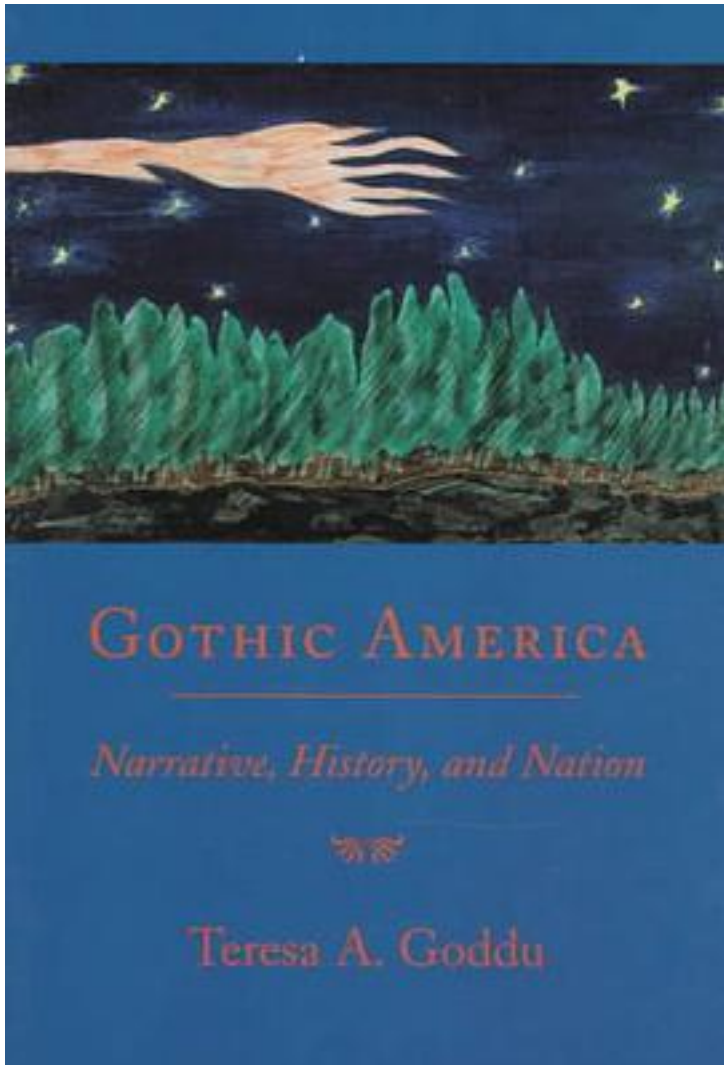


# Gothic America



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The gothic novel -the literary stronghold of ghosts, family curses, imperiled heroines and cumbersome plots- might be thought to fall under the category of "escapist fiction." But in this groundbreaking reappraisal, Teresa Goddu demonstrates that the American Gothic novel was, in often surprising ways, actively engaged with social, political, and cultural concerns of its time. Although social dislocations such as slavery or the massacre of Native Americans were repressed by our national consciousness, Goddu points out that these subjects were effectively incorporated by the gothic novel, articulated into an enduring national identity. Focusing on literature between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, Gothic America traces the development of the genre as a whole and of several subgenres -the female gothic, the Southern gothic, and the African-American gothic. Among the works Goddu reexamines are Poe's Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym, Hawthorne's The House of the Seven Gables and The Blithedale Romance, Alcott's ghost stories, and Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl. It is, finally, the African-American gothic that illuminates most clearly the link between frightening literature and a horror-filled social reality. Questioning basic assumptions about America's identity, Gothic America is a fresh examination of both a much-neglected genre of American literature and the complex historical circumstances that produced it.

作者介绍:

目录:

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