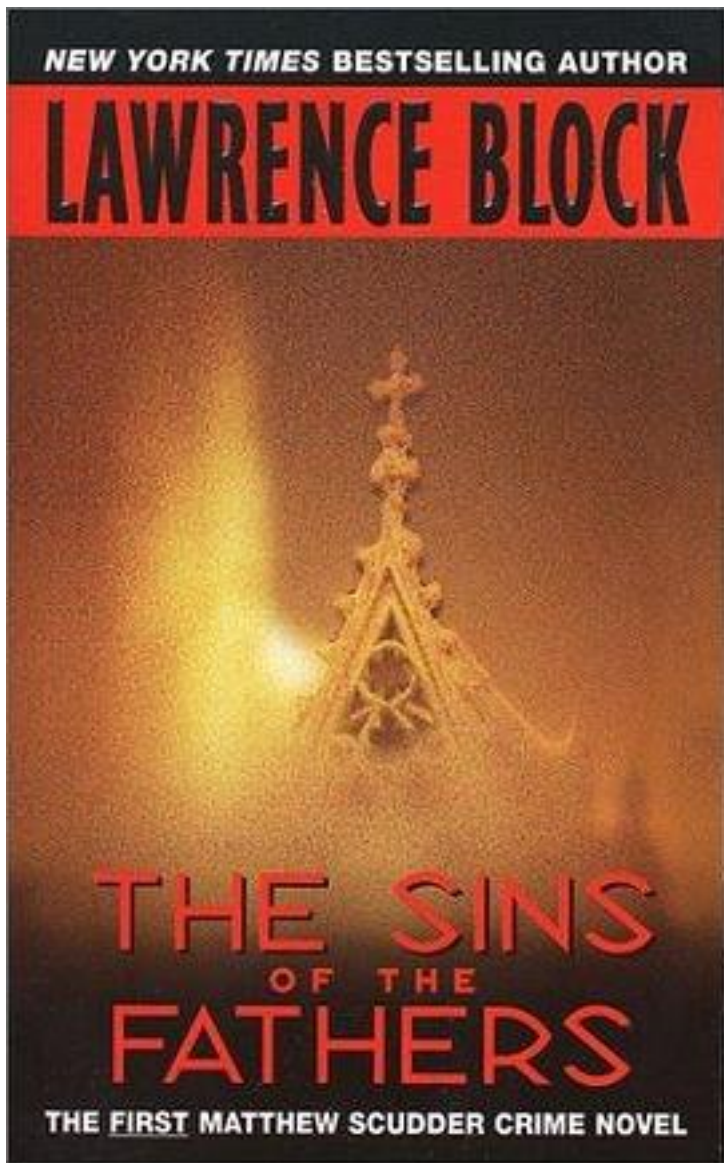


The Sins of the Fathers



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For nearly two millennia, Western law visited the sins of fathers and mothers upon their illegitimate children, subjecting them to systematic discrimination and deprivation. The graver the sins of their parents, the further these children fell in social standing and legal protection. While some reformers have sought to better the plight of illegitimate children, only in recent decades has illegitimacy lost its full legal sting. Yet the social, economic, and psychological costs of illegitimacy still remain high even in the liberal, affluent West. John Witte analyzes and critiques the shifting historical law and theology of illegitimacy. This doctrine, he argues, misinterprets basic biblical teachings on individual accountability and Christian community. It also betrays basic democratic principles of equality, dignity, and natural rights of all. There are no illegitimate children, only illegitimate parents, Witte concludes, and he presses for the protection and rights of all children, regardless of their birth status.

作者介绍:

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