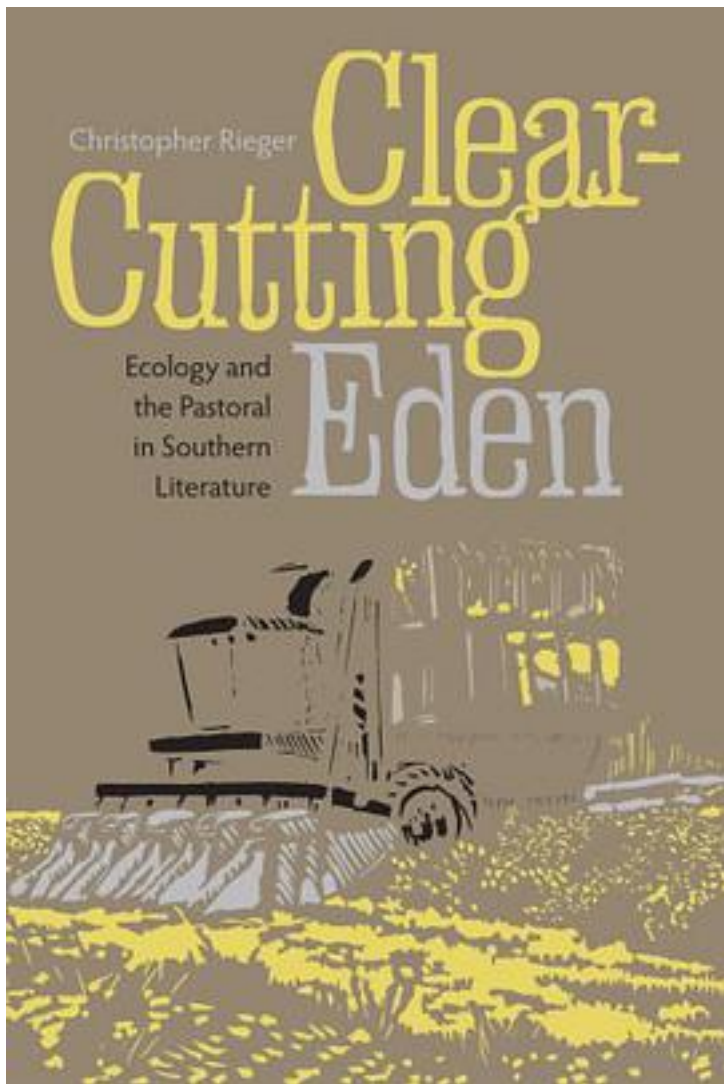


Clear-cutting Eden



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出版者:

出版时间:2009-1

装帧:

isbn:9780817316419

"Clear-Cutting Eden" examines how Southern literary depictions of the natural world were influenced by the historical, social, and ecological changes of the 1930s and 1940s. Rieger studies the ways that nature is conceived of and portrayed by four prominent Southern writers of the era: Erskine Caldwell, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Zora Neale Hurston, and William Faulkner. Specifically, he argues that these writers created new versions of an old literary mode--the pastoral--in response to the destabilizing effects of the Great Depression, the rise of Southern modernism, and the mechanization of agricultural jobs. Mass deforestation, soil erosion, urban development, and depleted soil fertility are issues that come to the fore in the works of these writers. In response, each author depicts a network model of nature, where humans are part of the natural world, rather than separate, over, or above it, as in the garden pastorals of the Old South, thus significantly revising the pastoral mode proffered by antebellum and Reconstruction-era writers. Each writer, Rieger finds, infuses the pastoral mode with continuing relevance, creating new versions that fit his or her ideological positions on issues of race, class, and gender. Despite the ways these authors represent nature and humankind's place in it, they all illustrate the idea that the natural environment is more than just a passive background against which the substance of life, or fiction, is played out.

作者介绍:

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