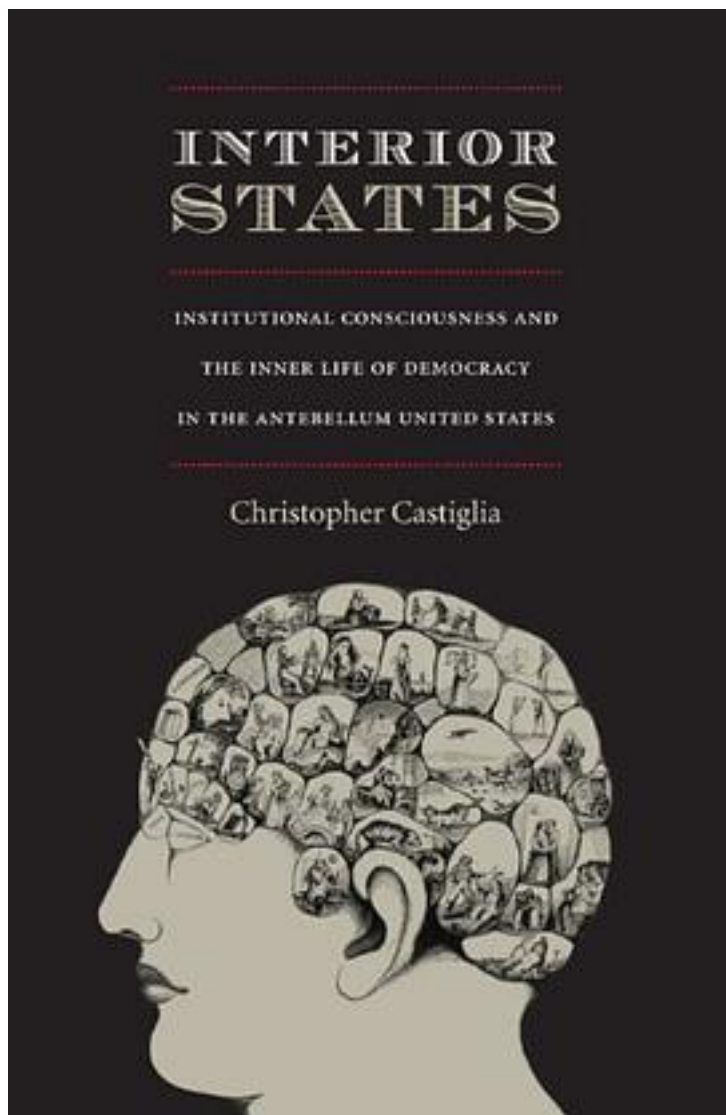


# Interior States



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In "Interior States", Christopher Castiglia focuses on U.S. citizens' democratic impulse: their ability to imagine and to work with others to create genuinely democratic publics while taking divergent views into account. Castiglia contends that citizens of the early United States were encouraged to locate this social impulse not in associations with others but in the turbulent and conflicted interiors of their own bodies. He describes how the human interior - with its battles between appetite and restraint, desire and deferral - became a displacement of the divided sociality of nineteenth-century America's public sphere and contributed to the vanishing of that sphere in the twentieth century and the twenty-first. Drawing insightful connections between political structures, social relations, and cultural forms, he explains that as the interior came to reflect the ideological conflicts of the social world, citizens were encouraged to (mis)understand vigilant self-scrutiny and self-management as effective democratic action. In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth, as discourses of interiority gained prominence, so did powerful counter-narratives. Castiglia reveals the flamboyant pages of antebellum popular fiction to be an archive of unruly democratic aspirations. Through close readings of works by Maria Monk and George Lippard, Walt Whitman and Timothy Shay Arthur, Hannah Foster and Hannah Crafts, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville, Castiglia highlights a refusal to be reformed or self-contained. In antebellum authors' representations of nervousness, desire, appetite, fantasy, and imagination, he finds democratic strivings that refused to disappear. Taking inspiration from those writers and turning to the present, Castiglia advocates a humanism-without-humans that, denied the adjudicative power of interiority, promises to release democracy from its inner life and to return it to the public sphere where U.S. citizens may yet create unprecedented possibilities for social action.

作者介绍:

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