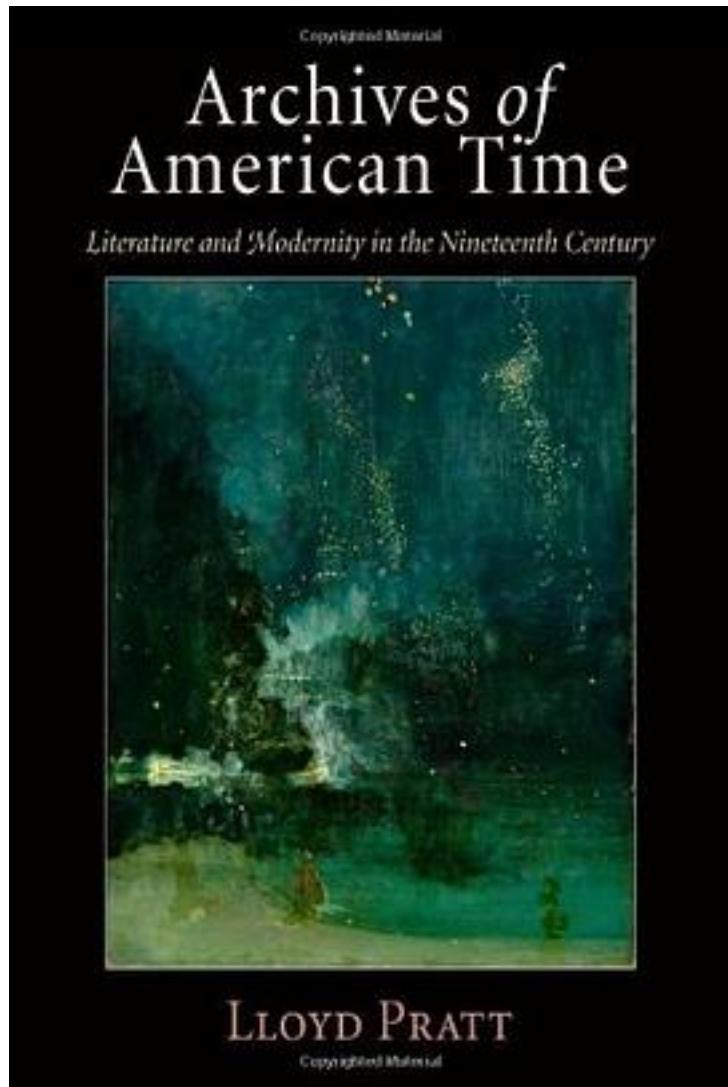


# Archives of American Time



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American historians have typically argued that a shared experience of time worked to bind the antebellum nation together. Trains, technology, and expanding market forces catapulted the United States into the future on a straight line of progressive time. The nation's exceedingly diverse population could cluster around this common temporality as one forward-looking people. In a bold revision of this narrative, *Archives of American Time* examines American literature's figures and forms to disclose the competing temporalities that in fact defined the antebellum period. Through discussions that link literature's essential qualities to social theories of modernity, Lloyd Pratt asserts that the competition between these varied temporalities forestalled the consolidation of national and racial identity. Paying close attention to the relationship between literary genre and theories of nationalism, race, and regionalism, *Archives of American Time* shows how the fine details of literary genres tell against the notion that they helped to create national, racial, or regional communities. Its chapters focus on images of invasive forms of print culture, the American historical romance, African American life writing, and Southwestern humor. Each in turn revises our sense of how these images and genres work in such a way as to reconnect them to a broad literary and social history of modernity. At precisely the moment when American authors began self-consciously to quest after a future in which national and racial identity would reign triumphant over all, their writing turned out to restructure time in a way that began foreclosing on that particular future.

作者介绍:

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