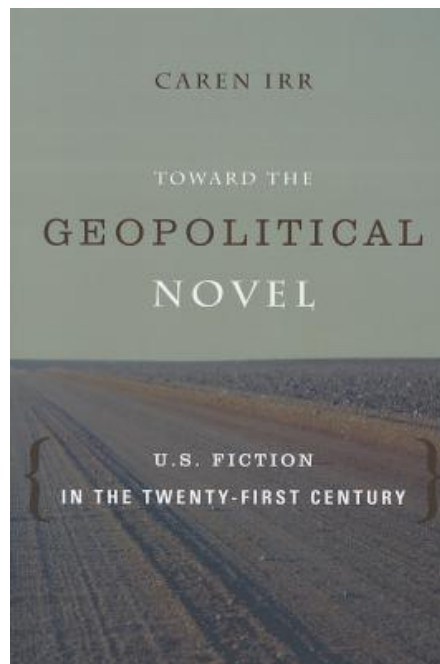




Toward the Geopolitical Novel: U.S. Fiction in the Twenty-First Century

Caren Irr

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A survey of more than 125 works illuminate the resurgence of the American political novel in the twenty-first century. Caren Irr follows Junot Díaz, Helon Habila, Aleksandar Hemon, Hari Kunzru, Dinaw Mengestu, Daniyal Mueenuddin, Norman Rush, Gary Shteyngart, and others as they rethink the migration narrative, the Peace Corps thriller, the national allegory, the revolutionary novel, and the expatriate's experience with self-discovery. Taken together, these innovations define a new literary form: the geopolitical novel. More cosmopolitan and socially critical than domestic realism, the genre tests American liberalism and explores how in-migration, out-migration, the nation, revolution, and the traveling subject should be retooled for a new century.

Toward the Geopolitical Novel: U.S. Fiction in the Twenty-First Century Details

Date : Published December 17th 2013 by Columbia University Press

ISBN : 9780231164412

Author : Caren Irr

Format : Paperback 264 pages

Genre :



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From Reader Review Toward the Geopolitical Novel: U.S. Fiction in the Twenty-First Century for online ebook

John Pappas says

Irr's stunning breadth of knowledge of the new or revived political modes of contemporary U.S. fiction, evidenced in her encyclopedic analytical survey of over 100 texts, brings new insight to the contemporary and emerging sub-genres that chart the intersections of Americans and the world. Looking deeply at the themes, structures, motifs and characters of these new "stories of migration, nationalism, [national allegory] and neoliberalism, revolution and the ex-patriate experience" Irr demonstrates how writers as diverse as Eggers, Diaz, Albani, D'Souza, Ghosh, Adichie and Chandra are thinking about the global political novel, globalism and its issues in general, as well as using the geopolitical novel to respond to these political issues and plumb their ethical and moral depths. At times, I wish she'd linger longer on a particular text, as her contextualization and analysis is so revealing, but her synthesis of some of the abstract tropes and modalities of these collective novels is really enlightening.

Brian says

Some really great generalizations about how contemporary fiction about the US can be organized into genres. A few of Irr's very short readings of novels are fairly compelling, but others are so vague and general that I could have done just as well reading the blurbs from their covers. Others, like Kunzru's *Transmission* are misleading and inaccurate descriptions of the plot. The book covers a very wide variety of novels, but her selection at times feels arbitrary. Irr explains that she pulled from the NYT Review of Books and major literary awards, which is fine, but her method for selecting which books she dealt with at greater length and which got short mention was much less clear. Why include Atwood's *After the Flood* but not *Oryx and Crake* to discuss contemporary dystopian novels? Or, why devote two long readings to Gary Shteyngart?
