



African American Gothic: Screams from Shadowed Places (American Literature Readings in the Twenty-First Century)

Maisha L. Wester

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Anyone who has seen a horror film or read a Stephen King novel is familiar with gothic tropes: dark villains who never tire of chasing hapless maidens; supernatural monsters; heroes who are sometimes weak; twisted, yet uncannily familiar, landscapes; the list goes on. Yet the gothic is more than a long list of tropes deployed to terrify. *African American Gothic* reveals the myriad ways African American writers manipulate the gothic genre to critique traditional racial ideologies. The book investigates fiction from each major era in African American culture, including *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, *Of One Blood*, *Cane*, *Invisible Man*, and *Corregidora*, to show how the gothic—when revised—serves as a useful vehicle for the enunciation of the peculiar terrors and complexities of black existence in America.

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