



Murdering Masculinities: Fantasies of Gender and Violence in the American Crime Novel (Sexual Cultures)

Gregory Forter

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Though American crime novels are often derided for containing misogynistic attitudes and limiting ideas of masculinity, Greg Forter maintains that they are instead psychologically complex and sophisticated works that demand closer attention. Eschewing the synthetic methodologies of earlier work on crime fiction, *Murdering Masculinities* argues that the crime novel does not provide a consolidated and stable notion of masculinity. Rather, it demands that male readers take responsibility for the desires they project on to these novels.

Forter examines the narrative strategies of five novels—Hammett's *The Glass Key*, Cain's *Serenade*, Faulkner's *Sanctuary*, Thompson's *Pop. 1280*, and Himes's *Blind Man with a Pistol*—in conjunction with their treatment of bodily metaphors of smell, vision, and voice. In the process, Forter unearths a "generic unconscious" that reveals things Freud both discovered and sought to repress.

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