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Hard Facts: Setting and Form in the American Novel

Philip Fisher

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A study of the popular novel of the 19th century and how it confronted the `hard facts' of American society of the time.

"Fisher makes striking observations about the cultural function of literature....[His] readings are based on a deep knowledge of literary and social theory, and he manages to make the theory his own. The result is a form of historical criticism that reformulates familiar subjects (the wilderness, the homestead, the city) so as to raise a wholly new set of questions."--Western Humanities "The study of American fiction of the 19th century has long been a business of reclamation.... Fisher's fascinating extension of this campaign in his treatment of Cooper and Stowe draws partly on previous pioneering efforts like Leslie A. Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel* and Leo Marx's *The Machine in the Garden*, and in its probing at the guilty root of the national culture it deserves to be placed alongside them, as classic American criticism."--Times Literary Supplement "A key text for anyone interested in theories of the novel, the nature of American fiction, or the dynamics of cultural history."-Library Journal "An essential book for all readers of the American novel."--Antioch "Bound to become required reading for anyone interested in American fiction and its relation to American culture."--Modern Language About the Author Philip Fisher is at Brandeis

University.