

A HISTORY OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN NOVEL

A History of the African American Novel offers an in-depth overview of the development of the novel and its major genres. In the first part of this book, Valerie Babb examines the evolution of the novel from the 1850s to the present, showing how the concept of black identity has transformed along with the art form. The second part of this book explores the prominent genres of African American novels, such as neo-slave narratives, detective fiction, and speculative fiction, and considers how each one reflects changing understandings of blackness. This book builds on other literary histories by including early black print culture, African American graphic novels, pulp fiction, and the history of adaptation of black novels to film. By placing novels in conversation with other documents – early black newspapers and magazines, film, and authorial correspondence – *A History of the African American Novel* brings many voices to the table to broaden interpretations of the novel's development.

VALERIE BABB is Franklin Professor of English and Director of the Institute for African American Studies at the University of Georgia. Among her publications are *Whiteness Visible: The Meaning of Whiteness in American Literature and Culture* (1998), *Black Georgetown Remembered* (1991) and *Ernest Gaines* (1991). She edited *The Langston Hughes Review* from 2000 to 2010. She has lectured extensively in the United States and abroad, and has presented a Distinguished W. E. B. Du Bois Lecture at Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany.

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VALERIE BABB

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*For M. D. B., D. L. B., H. M. B., and J. M. D. C.,
Always.
Love, Peace.*

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The novel, even more than sculpture or painting, is the flower of culture.

Charles Chesnutt

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