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Theodore Dreiser is one of the most penetrating observers of the greatest period of social change the United States ever saw. Writing as America emerged as the world's wealthiest nation, Dreiser chronicled industrial and economic transformation and the birth of consumerism with an unmatched combination of detail, sympathy, and power. The specially commissioned essays collected in this volume are written by a leading team of scholars of American literature and culture. They establish new parameters for both scholarly and classroom discussion of Dreiser. This Companion provides fresh perspectives on the frequently read classics, Sister Carrie and An American Tragedy, as well as on topics of perennial interest, such as Dreiser's representation of the city and his prose style. The volume investigates topics such as his representation of masculinity and femininity, and his treatment of ethnicity. It is the most comprehensive introduction to Dreiser's work available.

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