



Modernism, Race and Manifestos

By Laura Winkiel

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The modernist avant-garde used manifestos to outline their ideas, cultural programs and political agendas. Yet the manifesto, as a document of revolutionary change and a formative genre of modernism, has heretofore received little critical attention. This 2007 study reappraises the central role of manifestos in shaping the modernist movement by investigating twentieth-century manifestos from Europe and the Black Atlantic. Manifestos by writers from the imperial metropolis and the colonial 'periphery' drew very different emphases in their recasting of histories and experiences of modernity. Laura Winkiel examines archival materials as well as canonical texts to analyse how Sylvia Pankhurst, Virginia Woolf, Mina Loy, Wyndham Lewis, Nancy Cunard, C. L. R. James, W. E. B. Du Bois, Zora Neale Hurston, Aimé Césaire and others presented their modernist projects. This focus on manifestos in their geographical and historical context allows for a revision of modernism that emphasizes its cross-cultural aspects.

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Modernism, Race and Manifestos By Laura Winkiel Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #5540382 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Cambridge University Press
- Published on: 2011-08-18
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.02" h x .55" w x 5.98" l, .75 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 254 pages

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Review

"Winkiel's book offers a rich corrective to what she sees as a major blind spot in contemporary understandings of how the genre exposes political and aesthetic tensions along the color line and what they say about the process of modernity ... fresh material and perspectives that have the ability to inform Woolf scholarship's commitment to continually resituating Woolf's life and work to reveal new possibilities in understanding it as studies in literature embrace an increasingly global reach."

Woolf Studies Annual

About the Author

Laura Winkiel is Assistant Professor of English at Iowa State University.

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