

CRITICAL
COMPANIONS
TO POPULAR
CONTEMPORARY
WRITERS

ROBIN COOK

A Critical Companion

Lorena Laura Stookey

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Robin Cook A Critical Companion:

Robin Cook Lorena Laura Stookey, 1996-09-24 Like Arthur Conan Doyle before him best selling novelist Robin Cook has turned from the practice of medicine to that of writing popular suspense fiction Widely recognized as the Master of the Medical Thriller Cook uses the medium of the popular novel to address a range of social issues environmental pollution gender inequality in the workplace the risks inherent in the common practice of secrecy in science research and above all the ramifications of medicine's transition from profession to corporate industry This study analyzes in turn each of Cook's medical thrillers from *Coma* to *Contagion* Following a biographical chapter the genre chapter examines the ways in which Cook's medical thriller incorporates plotting conventions and strategies borrowed from such popular literary genres as the science fiction novel the murder mystery and the gothic romance Each novel is then examined in a separate chapter with subsections on plot character and theme Stookey also offers an alternative critical approach to the novel which gives the reader another perspective from which to read and discuss the text A complete bibliography of Cook's fiction general criticism and biographical sources and listings of reviews of each novel complete the work The only study of one of America's most popular contemporary novelists read by adults and young adults alike this is a key purchase for schools and public libraries

Robin Cook Lorena Laura Stookey, 2002-09-30 The first comprehensive study of the novels of Robin Cook Master of the Medical Thriller

James Herriot Michael Rossi, 1997-01-28 This study examines James Herriot's five major books as carefully crafted volumes of autobiography based on the building block of the short story In each of these works Herriot explores the fundamental choice of values underlying a happy and successful life In his vision the bonds of affection and mutual dependence between all creatures human and animal form an enduring theme that lies at the heart of the choices he makes in his personal and professional life This study will help the reader to understand the relationship between Herriot's stories and each book as a whole and to appreciate Herriot's work in the context of twentieth century anxieties about identity and meaning Following a biographical chapter that describes the relationship between Herriot's life and literary work Rossi discusses the genre of autobiography the relationship between truth and fiction in modern autobiography and Herriot's use of the genre A separate chapter is then devoted to each of Herriot's works in turn *All Creatures Great and Small* *All Things Bright and Beautiful* *All Things Wise and Wonderful* *The Lord God Made Them All* and *Every Living Thing* The discussion of each work includes sections on plot development and narrative structure character development thematic issues and alternative critical approaches that may be fruitfully applied to the book Helpful appendices contain identifications of minor characters in the works A complete bibliography of all of James Herriot's works critical sources and a listing of reviews of all of his works completes the volume Because of the popularity of Herriot's work among adults and young adults this companion will be a key purchase for school and public libraries

Tom Robbins Catherine E. Hoyser, Lorena Laura Stookey, 1997-10-28 This is the first book length study of the popular novelist Tom Robbins Whimsy and humor characterize

Robbins work but style and language are the keystones Hoyser and Stookey show how Robbins deftly uses style and humor to depict the absurdities and injustices of our world His novels constantly challenge perceptions of the world that people automatically label as normal His fiction criticizes the complacency of humans in a world becoming increasingly alienated from nature and the joy of life In addition to a critical analysis of each of his novels the study contains biographical material never before published and the first full length bibliography on Robbins including a bibliography of reviews of his fiction This is the first book length study of the popular novelist Tom Robbins Whimsy and humor characterize Robbins work but style and language are the keystones Hoyser and Stookey show how Robbins deftly uses style and humor to depict the absurdities and injustices of our world His novels constantly challenge perceptions of the world that people automatically label as normal His fiction criticizes the complacency of humans in a world becoming increasingly alienated from nature and the joy of life In addition to a critical analysis of each of his novels the study contains biographical material never before published and the first full length bibliography on Robbins including a bibliography of reviews of his fiction The study features a biographical chapter a chapter on context and style and individual chapters on each of his novels I Another Roadside Attraction R I Even Cowgirls Get the Blues Still Life with Woodpecker Jitterbug Perfume skinny legs and all R and I Half Asleep in Frog Pajamas R Each novel is analyzed for plot structure characterization and thematic elements In addition Hoyser and Stookey define and apply an alternative critical perspective from which to read each novel The reading of each of Robbins novels will be enriched by this perceptive study

John Grisham Mary Beth Pringle, 1997-05-28 With his seven legal thrillers all published since 1989 John Grisham has won a huge following of readers and set a standard few contributors to the genre can match Because of the success of his novels the legal thriller is the most popular genre in American fiction today In this study Pringle explains how Grisham s legal thriller evolved from the thriller tradition and borrowed from the heroic romance novel gothic novel crime novel and detective fiction She shows how his novels examine contemporary social and legal problems that do not have simple solutions ecology ethnic relations capital punishment corporate greed and health insurance and how he depicts both the legal system and lawyers in their best and worst lights Following a biographical chapter that focuses on Grisham s childhood in Arkansas education political career and development as a writer Pringle examines the legal thriller its antecedents and Grisham s contribution to the genre An individual chapter is devoted to analysis of each of his novels Each chapter synthesizes the novel discusses its reception by critics and features sections on plot development character development social historical context and issues and an alternative critical perspective from which to approach the novel such as psychoanalytic theory or feminist criticism The work includes a complete bibliography of Grisham s work critical sources and list of reviews of all of his novels Because of Grisham s popularity with adults and young adults and the contemporary issues he raises this study is valuable to students book discussion group participants and other interested readers and is an essential purchase for school and public libraries

Ernest J. Gaines Karen Carmean, 1998-07-28

Drawing on his rich Louisiana past Ernest J Gaines creates a fictional world representative of the human experience His work explores the complex racial relationships so much a part of Southern history and culture and the unwritten and unspoken conventions of caste and class Often structured around journeys of discovery Gaines works affirm the integrity of the individual and the unequivocal place in American life for Americans of African descent This study offers a clear accessible reading of Gaines fiction It analyzes in turn all of Gaines novels as well as his collection of short stories A complete bibliography of Gaines fiction as well as selected reviews and criticism completes the study Following a biographical chapter on Gaines life an overview of his fiction explores his work in light of his literary heritage and use of genre Each of the following chapters examines an individual novel Catherine Carmier 1964 Of Love and Dust 1967 The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman 1971 In My Father s House 1978 A Gathering of Old Men 1983 A Lesson Before Dying 1994 and a collection of short stories Bloodline 1968 The discussion of each work includes sections on plot and character development thematic issues and an alternative critical approach from which to read the novel Carmean shows how each of Gaines novels focuses on themes of personal value and place and affirms the need for recognizing the value of the individual regardless of race This study will help readers to understand the compelling issue of human relationships raised by Gaines and to see why he is one of America s finest writers

John Jakes Mary Ellen Jones,1996-11-01 John Jakes often called the people s author and godfather of the historical novel has made American history come to life in his series The Kent Family Chronicles and The North and South Trilogy Through these novels Jakes conveys the sweep of American history both its glory and its grim scenes from the American Revolution to the opening moments of the 20th century Never glossing over the nation s flaws slavery materialism a double edged Manifest Destiny Jakes nevertheless affirms American values This is the first full length critical study of his work It examines in detail Jakes 13 major novels to date and assesses his methods as America s history teacher In Part I following a chapter on Jakes life Jones examines the early novels and Jakes use of the genres of historical fiction the western and the historical family sage Part II The Kent Family Chronicles devotes an individual chapter to each of the novels in this series The Bastard The Rebels The Seekers The Furies The Titans The Warriors The Lawless and The Americans Part III New Beginnings features chapters on North and South Love and War and Heaven and Hell and chapters on California Gold and Homeland The examination of each novel in this study includes sections on plot development character development and thematic issues Jones also offers an alternative critical perspective from which to read each novel such as feminist literary criticism New Historicism Marxist criticism and Deconstructionism that gives the reader an alternative viewpoint from which to consider the novel A complete bibliography of all of John Jakes work works about John Jakes and a listing of reviews of all the novels examined in the book concludes the study

Ken Follett Richard C. Turner Ph.D,1996-11-25 Ken Follett had the purest of motives when he began writing fiction he did it for the money But after I Eye of the Needle R catapulted him to success and secured his reputation as a master of the spy thriller he both built on that

success with other spy thrillers and experimented equally successfully with other genres such as the family saga and the historical romance This is the first full length study of his work and it includes individual examinations of each of his major novels from *Eye of the Needle* 1978 to *A Place Called Freedom* 1995 as well as his early novels Following a chapter on Follett's life and career Turner discusses in depth Follett's early novels and his one nonfiction work *On the Wings of Eagles* A genre chapter examines Follett's use of historical settings and his use of the genres of spy thriller saga and historical romance in his novels The rest of the study is devoted to an individual examination of each of his novels in turn with subsections on plot character theme point of view and literary devices Turner also offers an alternative critical approach to reading each novel such as psychoanalytical Marxist or reader response to give the reader another perspective from which to read and discuss it A complete bibliography of Follett's fiction general criticism and biographical sources and listings of reviews of all the novels examined in the study completes the work The only study of one of the best selling writers today who appeals to adults and young adults alike this is a key purchase for schools and public libraries *Critical Companion to Herman Melville* Carl Edmund Rollyson, Lisa Olson Paddock, April Gentry, 2007 *Critical Companion to Herman Melville* examines the life and work of a writer who spent much of his career in obscurity **No Way of Knowing** Pamela Donovan, 2004-02-24 This book examines both old media treatment of crime legends news reports fictional film and television depictions as well as new media interactive discussions of them via the Internet and electronic mail

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