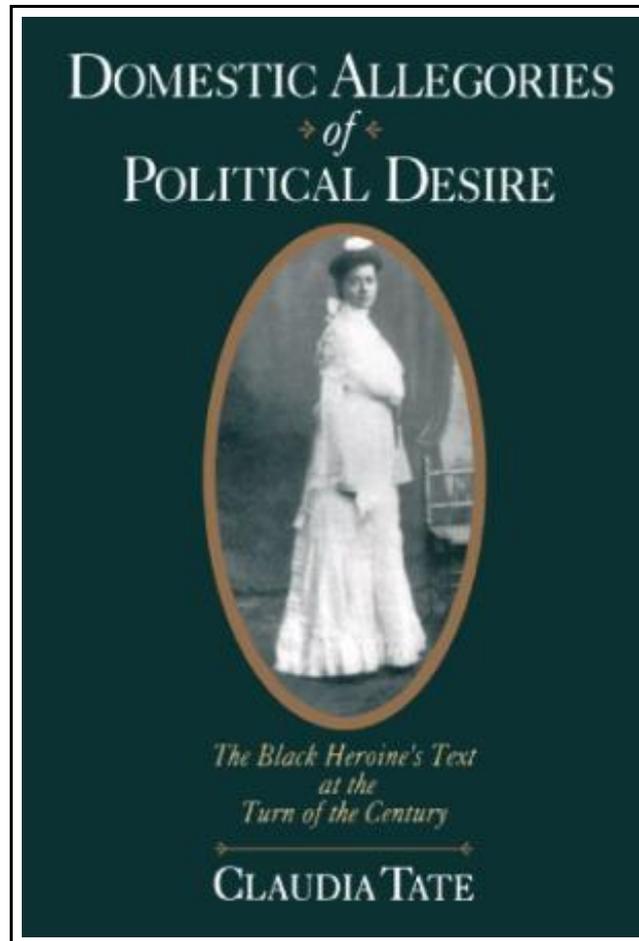


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Oxford University Press Inc, United States, 1996. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Revised ed.. 232 x 154 mm. Language: English Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Why did African-American women novelists use idealized stories of bourgeois courtship and marriage to mount arguments on social reform during the last decade of the nineteenth century, during a time when resurgent racism conditioned the lives of all black Americans? Such stories now seem like apolitical fantasies to contemporary readers. This is the question at the centre of Tate s examination of the novels of Pauline Hopkins, Emma Kelley, Amelia Johnson, Katherine Tillman, and Frances Harper. *Domestic Allegories of Political Desire* is more than a literary study; it is also a social and intellectual history-a cultural critique of a period that historian Rayford W. Logan called the Dark Ages of recent American history. Against a rich contextual framework, extending from abolitionist protest to the Black Aesthetic, Tate argues that the idealized marriage plot in these novels does not merely depict the heroine s happiness and economic prosperity. More importantly, that plot encodes a resonant cultural narrative-a domestic allegory-about the political ambitions of an emancipated people. Once this domestic allegory of political desire is unmasked in these novels, it can be seen as a significant discourse of the post-Reconstruction era for representing African-Americans collective dreams about freedom and for reconstructing those contested dreams into consummations of civil liberty.

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