

## WALLACE STEVENS AND THE POETICS OF MODERNIST AUTONOMY

*Wallace Stevens and the Poetics of Modernist Autonomy* presents a rethinking of modernist claims to autonomy by focusing on the work of Wallace Stevens, one of the most renowned poets of the twentieth century. By showing how multiple socio-political currents underlie and motivate Stevens' version of autonomy, the book challenges the commonly received accounts of the term as art and literature's escape from the world. It provides new and close readings of Stevens' work including poems from different stages of the poet's career and re-energizes a tradition of historicist readings of Stevens from the 1980s and 1990s. The study of Stevens' work in this book is developed in constant dialogue with current studies in modernism and aesthetic theory, particularly those offered by Jacques Rancière and Alain Badiou. The book examines the question of autonomy in Stevens' exploration of the aesthetic and social domains, and the vexed issue of his poetry's relation to philosophical thinking.

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*And yet relation appears,  
A small relation expanding like the shade*  
—Wallace Stevens, “A Connoisseur of Chaos” (1942)

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*For Jussi*

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## *Abbreviations*

<i>CP</i>	T. S. Eliot, <i>Collected Poems, 1909–1962</i>
<i>CPP</i>	Wallace Stevens, <i>Collected Poetry and Prose</i>
<i>L</i>	Holly Stevens, editor, <i>Letters of Wallace Stevens</i>
<i>ND</i>	Theodor W. Adorno, <i>Negative Dialectics</i>
<i>NL</i>	Theodor W. Adorno, <i>Notes to Literature Vol. I</i>
<i>SLT</i>	Susan Howe, <i>Souls of the Labadie Tract</i>
<i>SM</i>	Beverly Cole and Alain Filreis, editors, <i>Secretaries of the Moon: The Letters of Wallace Stevens &amp; José Rodríguez</i>
<i>WSJ</i>	<i>The Wallace Stevens Journal</i>

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