

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

The Cambridge History of American Literature addresses the broad spectrum of new and established directions in all branches of American writing and includes the work of scholars and critics who have shaped, and who continue to shape, what has become a major area of literary scholarship. The authors span three decades of achievement in American literary criticism, thereby speaking for both continuity and change between generations of scholarship. Generously proportioned narratives allow at once for a broader vision and sweep of American literary history than has been possible previously. And while the voice of traditional criticism forms a background for these narratives, it joins forces with the diversity of interests that characterize contemporary literary studies.

The *History* offers wide-ranging, interdisciplinary accounts of American genres and periods. Generated partly by the recent unearthing of previously neglected texts, the expansion of material in American literature coincides with a dramatic increase in the diversity of approaches to that material. The multifaceted scholarly and critical enterprise embodied in *The Cambridge History of American Literature* addresses these multiplicities – social, cultural, intellectual, and aesthetic – and demonstrates a richer concept of authority in literary studies than is found in earlier accounts.

This volume covers a pivotal era in the formation of American identity. Four leading scholars connect the literature with the massive historical changes then underway. Richard H. Brodhead describes the foundation of a permanent literary culture in America. Nancy Bentley locates the origins of nineteenth-century Realism in an elite culture's responses to an emergent mass culture, embracing high literature as well as a wide spectrum of cultural outsiders: African Americans, women, and Native Americans. Walter Benn Michaels emphasizes the critical role that turn-of-the-century fiction played in the re-evaluation of the individual at the advent of modern bureaucracy. Susan L. Mizruchi analyzes the economic and cultural representations of a new national heterogeneity that helped forecast the multicultural future of modern America. Together, these narratives constitute the richest, most detailed account to date of American literature and culture between 1860 and 1920.

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Volume 3
Prose Writing
1860–1920

General Editor
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BECOMING MULTICULTURAL: CULTURE, ECONOMY, AND
THE NOVEL, 1860–1929

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