

## The Cambridge Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Poetry

The Cambridge Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Poetry is designed to give readers a brief but thorough introduction to the various movements, schools, and groups of American poets in the twentieth century. It will help readers to understand and analyze modern and contemporary poems. The first part of the book deals with the transition from the nineteenth-century lyric to the modernist poem, focusing on the work of major modernists such as Robert Frost, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Wallace Stevens, Marianne Moore, and William Carlos Williams. In the second half of the book, the focus is on groups such as the poets of the Harlem Renaissance, the New Critics, the Confessionals, and the Beats. In each chapter, discussions of the most important poems are placed in the larger context of literary, cultural, and social history. This volume will be invaluable for students and teachers alike.

CHRISTOPHER BEACH is Adjunct Assistant Professor at Claremont Graduate University. He is the author of several books in the field of American poetry and one book on American cinema. His most recent books are Poetic Culture: Contemporary American Poetry between Community and Institution and Class, Language, and American Film Comedy. He is also the editor of Artifice and Indeterminacy: an Anthology of New Poetics.



## The Cambridge Introduction to **Twentieth-Century American Poetry**

CHRISTOPHER BEACH





PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge, CB2 2RU, UK 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011–4211, USA 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

http://www.cambridge.org

© Christopher Beach, 2003

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2003

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typefaces Bembo 11/12.5 pt., Plantin, Univers System  $\LaTeX$  2 $_{\mathcal{E}}$  [TB]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Beach, Christopher.

The Cambridge introduction to twentieth-century American poetry / by Christopher Beach.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 81469 3 (hardback) - ISBN 0 521 89149 3 (paperback)

I Title

PS323.5.B387 2003

811'.509 - dc21 2003043580

ISBN 0 521 81469 3 hardback

ISBN 0 521 89149 3 paperback



For my father, Northrop Beach 1912–2002



## Contents

	Introduction page 1	
1	A new century: from the genteel poets to Robinson and Frost	7
2	Modernist expatriates: Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot 23	
3	Lyric modernism: Wallace Stevens and Hart Crane 49	
4	Gendered modernism 72	
5	William Carlos Williams and the modernist American scene 93	
6	From the Harlem Renaissance to the Black Arts movement 114	
7	The New Criticism and poetic formalism 137	
8	The confessional moment 154	
9	Lyric as meditation 173	
10	The New American Poetry and the postmodern avant-garde 189	
	Notes 210 Glossary 215 Index 217	