

VAGABONDS, TRAMPS, AND HOBOS

The most enduring version of the hobo that has come down from the so-called ‘Golden Age of Tramping’ (1890s to 1940s) is an American cultural icon, signifying freedom from restraint and rebellion to the established order while reinforcing conservative messages about American exceptionalism, individualism, race, and gender. *Vagabonds, Tramps, and Hobos* shows that this ‘pioneer hobo’ image is a misrepresentation by looking at works created by transient artists and thinkers, including travel literature, fiction, memoir, early feminist writing, poetry, sociology, political journalism, satire, and music. This book explores the diversity of meanings that accrue around ‘the hobo’ and ‘the tramp’. It is the first analysis to frame transiency within a nineteenth-century literary tradition of the vagabond, a figure who attempts to travel without money. This book provides new ways for scholars to think about the activity and representation of US transiency.

OWEN CLAYTON is a senior lecturer in English Literature at the University of Lincoln. He has written and edited several books, including *Representing Homelessness* (2021). He has been awarded Newberry Library and William P. Heidrich Fellowships, as well as the British Association of American Studies (BAAS) Ambassador’s Award.

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VAGABONDS, TRAMPS,
AND HOBOS

The Literature and Culture of U.S. Transiency 1890–1940

OWEN CLAYTON

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For Kate and Utah, who didn't go anywhere.

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