This volume provides a comprehensive overview of Nathaniel Hawthorne and demonstrates why he continues to be a critically significant figure in American literature. The first part focuses on Hawthorne’s interest in and knowledge of past (Puritan and colonial) and contemporary nineteenth-century history (women’s, African American, Native American) as the inspiration for his writings and the source of his literary success. The second part explores his fascination with social history and popular culture by examining topics such as mesmerism, utopian life styles, theatrical performances, and artistic innovations. The third part looks at how Hawthorne succeeded and excelled in the literary marketplace, as an author of children’s literature, literary sketches, and historical romances. In the fourth part, Hawthorne’s literary precursors, peers, colleagues, and successors are analyzed. In the final part, Hawthorne’s attachment to family, nature, and home is examined as the source of creative inspiration and philosophical questing.

Monika M. Elbert is Professor of English and Distinguished University Scholar at Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ. Former editor of the Nathaniel Hawthorne Review, she has published extensively on Hawthorne (Encoding the Letter A: Gender and Authority in Hawthorne’s Early Fiction, 1990, two editions of The Scarlet Letter, and numerous essays on Hawthorne and on other nineteenth-century American authors). Recent books include coedited collections: Romantic Education in Nineteenth-Century American Literature: National and Transatlantic Contexts (2015, with Lesley Ginsberg), Anglo-American Travelers and the Hotel Experience in Nineteenth-Century Literature (2017, with Susanne Schmid), and Haunting Realities: Naturalist Gothic and American Realism (2017, with Wendy Ryden).
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE
IN CONTEXT

EDITED BY
MONIKA M. ELBERT

Montclair State University

Cambridge University Press
In memory of Stephen Foss,
1954–2016
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Notes on Contributors


Rita Bode is Professor of English Literature at Trent University in Canada. She is the coeditor of *L. M. Montgomery's Rainbow Valleys: The Ontario Years, 1911–1942* (2015) and of *L. M. Montgomery and the Matter of Nature(s)* (2018). She has published widely on a range of American and British authors, such as Conrad, Melville, and Spofford. Other recent work includes book chapters on George Eliot’s, Harriet Beecher Stowe’s, and Edith Wharton’s Italian novels in *Transatlantic Conversations* (2017) and in *Edith Wharton and Cosmopolitanism* (2016).

Kristin Boudreau is the Paris Fletcher Distinguished Professor of Humanities and Head of the Department of Humanities and Arts at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Her books include *Sympathy in American Literature: American Sentiments from Jefferson to the Jameses* (2002), *The Spectacle of Death: Populist Literary Responses to American Capital Cases* (2006), *Henry James’s Narrative Technique: Consciousness, Perception, and Cognition* (2010), and with Megan Stoner Morgan, the coedited Broadview Edition, *Henry James’s Daisy Miller* (2012). In recent years she has turned her attention to transforming engineering
education by contextualizing engineering challenges in their historical, cultural, geographic, and political settings.

**Leonardo Buonomo** teaches American literature at the University of Trieste, Italy. He studied at the University of Venice, Italy, and the University of California at San Diego. He has written widely on nineteenth-century American literature (in particular, the literary representation of Italy), Italian American literature, and American popular culture. His latest book is *Immigration, Ethnicity, and Class in American Writing, 1830–1860: Reading the Stranger* (2014). Recently, he contributed to a special issue of *The Nathaniel Hawthorne Review* on “Transatlanticism and *The Blithedale Romance*.” He currently serves as Vice President of the Henry James Society.


**David Cody**, who received his BA from Tufts University and his PhD from Brown University, is Babcock Professor of English at Hartwick College. His articles and essays on Hawthorne, Melville, Poe, Spofford, Dickinson, Cooper, Whitman, Adams, Faulkner, and other American and British authors have appeared in many scholarly journals, books, and annual volumes.

**Michael Cody** teaches American and American Indian literatures at East Tennessee State University. He is coeditor of *The Literary Magazine and Other Writings, 1801–1897*, volume three of *The Collected Writings of Charles Brockden Brown*. Other publications include *Charles Brockden Brown and the Literary Magazine* and “‘As Kinsmen, Met a Night’: Charles Brockden Brown and Nathaniel Hawthorne as American Gothic Romancers.”

**Michael J. Colacurcio** received his BA and MA from Xavier University; his PhD is from the University of Illinois. From 1963 to 1986 he taught
at Cornell University; since then he has taught at UCLA. His principal writings on Hawthorne and the Puritans include The Province of Piety (1984) and Godly Letters (2006), along with several earlier essays, and a lengthy introduction to the John Harvard Library Edition of The Scarlet Letter (2009).

Monika M. Elbert is Professor of English and Distinguished University Scholar at Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ. Former editor of the Nathaniel Hawthorne Review, she has published extensively on Hawthorne (Encoding the Letter A: Gender and Authority in Hawthorne’s Early Fiction, 1990, two editions of The Scarlet Letter, and numerous essays). Recent books include coedited collections: Romantic Education in Nineteenth-Century American Literature: National and Transatlantic Contexts (2015, with Lesley Ginsberg), Anglo-American Travelers and the Hotel Experience in Nineteenth-Century Literature (2017, with Susanne Schmid), and Haunting Realities: Naturalist Gothic and American Realism (2017, with Wendy Ryden).


Kristie G. Hamilton is Associate Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She is the author of America’s Sketchbook: The Cultural Life of a Nineteenth-Century Literary Genre (1998) and has published essays on Hawthorne, Hannah Webster Foster, Fanny Fern, and the literature of labor.

Les Harrison is Associate Professor of English at Virginia Commonwealth University. In 2013 he received a Fulbright Grant to study American
Notes on Contributors

Literature at Ghent University, Belgium. In addition to serving as an associate editor for *The Melville Electronic Library*, he is a principal editor of *The Commonwealth Poe*, an online critical edition of the works of Edgar Allan Poe.

**James Hewitson** teaches in the Department of English at the University of Tennessee. He completed his PhD at the University of Toronto and is currently finishing *Sentimental Apocalypticism: Hawthorne, Reform and the Civil War*, a book-length examination the intersections of sentimental and apocalyptic discourse in nineteenth-century American literature. He has published articles on Jonathan Edwards, Nathaniel Hawthorne, documentary photography, and popular film, and his work has appeared in journals such as *ESQ, The Nathaniel Hawthorne Review*, and *Interdisciplinary Humanity*, as well as a number of collections.

**Margaret Jay Jessee** is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Alabama at Birmingham where she teaches courses on American literature and gender studies. Her article “Veiling Ladies and Narrative Masquerade in *The Blithedale Romance*” appeared in *Nathaniel Hawthorne Review* in 2014. Her scholarly work on the relationship between narrative style and gender expression has also appeared in *JML: Journal of Modern Literature* and *South Atlantic Review* as well as in a chapter in *Edith Wharton: Critical Insights*, edited by Myrto Drizou (2017).

**Martin Kevorkian** is the author of *Writing beyond Prophecy: Emerson, Hawthorne, and Melville after the American Renaissance* (2013). His essays include “Septimius and the Fate of the American Scholar,” “Reading the Bloody ‘Face of Nature’ in Hawthorne’s *Marble Faun,*” and “‘Within the domain of Chaos’: Nathaniel Hawthorne, Lucretian Physics, and Martial Logic.” He is Professor of English at the University of Texas at Austin.

**Richard Kopley** is Distinguished Professor of English, Emeritus, Penn State DuBois, and is the author of *Edgar Allan Poe and the Dupin Mysteries, The Threads of ‘The Scarlet Letter,’* and a variety of articles on American Renaissance writers such as Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, and Thoreau. He has also edited several books, including Ebenezer Wheelwright’s 1842 novel *The Salem Belle*, a source for *The Scarlet Letter*. Forthcoming is his book *The Formal Center in Literature: Explorations from Poe to the Present.*
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Laura L. Mielke is Associate Professor of English at the University of Kansas. She is the author of Provocative Eloquence: Theatre, Violence, and Anti-Slavery Speech in the Antebellum U.S. (forthcoming) and Moving Encounters: Sympathy and the Indian Question in Antebellum Literature (2008), and the co-editor with Joshua David Bellin of Native Acts: Indian Performance, 1607–1823 (2011).

Ricardo Miguel-Alfonso is Associate Professor of American Studies and Literary Theory at the University of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain. He is the author of El romanticismo en Estados Unidos y la idea de la literatura (American Romanticism and the Idea of Literature, forthcoming) and has recently coedited with David LaRocca A Power to Translate the World: New Essays on Emerson and International Culture (2015). He is the author of journal essays and book chapters on such figures as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Eliza Haywood, Henry D. Thoreau, Lydia Sigourney, and Nathaniel Hawthorne. He has also translated into Spanish Ralph Waldo Emerson’s Essays and George Santayana’s Reason in Art, among others, and is currently at work on a book manuscript on Emerson’s career as a symbol of philosophical and aesthetic modernity in the United States.

Jonathan W. Murphy is Associate Professor of English and Chair of the Department of Humanities at Texas A&M University. He is currently writing a book manuscript that examines the varied responses of some of the leading authors of the American Renaissance to the conjoined crises of slavery and Civil War. He has published articles on Hawthorne in The Arizona Quarterly and The Nathaniel Hawthorne Review and contributed to Nathaniel Hawthorne in the College Classroom (eds. Christopher Diller and Samuel Coale, 2017).

Frederick Newberry is Emeritus Professor of English at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA. In addition to numerous essays on Hawthorne and other nineteenth-century American writers, he has authored Hawthorne’s Divided Loyalties: England and America in His Works. For
sixteen years, he edited the *Nathaniel Hawthorne Review*. Currently, he is preparing a book-length manuscript on Hawthorne’s biographers.

**Marianne Noble** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Literature at American University in Washington, DC. She is the author of *The Masochistic Pleasures of Sentimental Literature* (2000) and coeditor of *Emily Dickinson and Philosophy* (2013, with Jed Deppman and Gary Lee Stonum). She is currently completing a book on sympathy and human contact in American Romantic literature.

**Derek Pacheco** is Associate Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies in English at Purdue University. He is the author of *Moral Enterprise: Literature and Education in Antebellum America* (2013), as well as several articles on Nathaniel Hawthorne. His research and teaching interests include nineteenth-century literature, children’s literature, transcendentalism, transatlantic studies, print culture, and book history.


**Leland S. Person** is Nathaniel P. Ropes Professor of English in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Cincinnati. He is the author or editor of eight books and dozens of articles on nineteenth-century American literature, with emphasis on the writers Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry James, Edgar Allan Poe, Herman Melville, and James Fenimore Cooper. He has served as president of the Nathaniel Hawthorne Society and the Henry James Society.

**Steven Petersheim** is Associate Professor of English and Honors Program Director at Indiana University East. He coedited *Writing the Environment in Nineteenth-Century American Literature: The Ecological Awareness of Early Scribes of Nature* (2015, with Madison P. Jones). He has also published articles on Hawthorne in *Nathaniel Hawthorne Review*,...
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College Literature, and elsewhere. Currently, he is finishing a monograph that takes an ecocritical approach to Hawthorne’s romances.

Joel Pfister is Olin Professor of American Studies and English and Chair of the American studies department at Wesleyan University. His six books include The Production of Personal Life: Class, Gender, and the Psychological in Hawthorne’s Fiction (1991), Critique for What? Cultural Studies, American Studies, Left Studies (2006), and Surveyors of Customs: American Literature as Cultural Analysis (2016). He also co-edited Inventing the Psychological: Toward as Cultural History of Emotional Life in America (1997).

Larry J. Reynolds is University Distinguished Professor and Thomas Franklin Mayo Professor of Liberal Arts at Texas A&M University. He is a former president of the Hawthorne Society and author or editor of nine books, including A Historical Guide to Nathaniel Hawthorne (2001), Devils and Rebels: The Making of Hawthorne’s Damned Politics (2008), and Righteous Violence: Revolution, Slavery, and the American Renaissance (2011).


Magnus Ullén is Professor of English at Stockholm University, Sweden. He is the author of The Half-Vanished Structure: Hawthorne’s Allegorical Dialectics (2001), and he guest-edited a special issue of the Nathaniel Hawthorne Review with David Greven on Hawthorne’s posthumous publications in 2009. His articles on American literature, pornography, and literary theory have appeared in many journals.

Patricia Dunlavy Valenti is Professor Emerita at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke where she was director of the Graduate Program in English Education and chair of Strategic Planning and Resources. She has published in the areas of English education and women’s literature,
and on the writers of the American transcendentalist period, particularly Nathaniel and Sophia Hawthorne and the domestic politics of authorship that affected their creativity. Valenti is the author To Myself a Stranger: A Biography of Rose Hawthorne Lathrop (1991) and Sophia Peabody Hawthorne, a Life, 2 volumes (2004, 2013). Information about her books is available at www.patriciadunlavyvalenti.com

Evert Jan van Leeuwen is a lecturer in British and American literature and culture at Leiden University, where he received his PhD in 2006. He specializes in the history and development of gothic, horror, science fiction, and speculative fiction from the mid-eighteenth to the late twentieth century. His specific research interests are in the relation between form and ideology in works by the William Godwin circle, nineteenth-century Romancers like Bulwer, Poe, Lippard, and Hawthorne, and the counterculture and new wave science-fiction writers of the 1960s and ’70s, including Brian Aldiss and Ursula Le Guin. He is coeditor, with Marguerite Corporaal, of The Literary Utopias of Cultural Communities 1790–1910 (2010) and has published articles in, among others, the Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies, the Nathaniel Hawthorne Review, and Studies in Gothic Fiction.

Ellen Weinauer is the Dean of the Honors College and Associate Professor of English at the University of Southern Mississippi. She is the coeditor, with Robert McClure Smith, of American Culture, Canons, and the Case of Elizabeth Stoddard (2003), and the author of articles on Hawthorne, Melville, Frederick Douglass, Elizabeth Stoddard, and others. Her manuscript in progress examines the relationship between marriage, ownership, and the Gothic in mid-nineteenth-century American literature.


Susan S. Williams is Professor of English at Ohio State University. She is the author of Confounding Images: Photography and Portraiture in Antebellum American Fiction and Reclaiming Authorship: Literary Women in America, 1850–1900. She is also a former coeditor of the journal American Periodicals and edited the Bedford College Edition of The Scarlet Letter.
Abbreviations

References to the works of Hawthorne are to *The Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, ed. William Charvat et al. (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1962–1994), and are cited parenthetically in the text by volume and page number:

1: *The Scarlet Letter*
2: *The House of the Seven Gables*
3: *The Blithedale Romance and Fanshawe*
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