

WORLD WAR ONE, AMERICAN LITERATURE, AND THE FEDERAL STATE

In this book, Mark Whalan argues that World War One's major impact on US culture was not the experience of combat trauma, but rather the effects of the expanded federal state bequeathed by US mobilization. Writers bristled at the state's new intrusions and coercions, but were also intrigued by its creation of new social ties and political identities. This excitement informed early American modernism, whose literary experiments often engaged the political innovations of the Progressive state at war. Writers such as Wallace Stevens, John Dos Passos, Willa Cather, Zane Grey, and Edith Wharton were fascinated by wartime discussions over the nature of US citizenship, and also crafted new forms of writing that could represent a state now so complex it seemed to defy representation at all. And many looked to ordinary activities transformed by the war – such as sending mail, receiving health care, and driving a car – to explore the state's everyday presence in American lives.

MARK WHALAN is Robert and Eve Horn Professor of English at the University of Oregon. His previous books include *American Literature in the 1910s* (2010), *The Great War and the Culture of the New Negro* (2008), and *Race, Manhood and Modernism in America: The Short Story Cycles of Sherwood Anderson and Jean Toomer* (2007). He has published in *American Literary History*, *Modernism/Modernity*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, the *Journal of American Studies*, *Twentieth Century Literature*, and *African American Review*, and is coeditor, with Martin Halliwell, of the Modern American Literature and the New Twentieth Century series with Edinburgh University Press.

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Mark Whalan

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MARK WHALAN

University of Oregon



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