

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF
NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE

Native American literature has always been uniquely embattled. It is marked by particularly divergent opinions about what constitutes authenticity, sovereignty, and even literature. It announces a culture beset by paradox: simultaneously primordial and postmodern; oral and inscribed; outmoded and novel; quixotic and quotidian. Above all, its texts are a site of political struggle, shifting to meet expectations both external and internal. This Cambridge History endeavors to capture and question the contested character of both Indigenous texts and the way they are evaluated. This book has a chronological structure. It delineates significant periods of literary and cultural development in four parts: “Traces and Removals” (pre-1870s); “Assimilation and Modernity” (1879–1967); “Native American Renaissance” (post-1960s); and “Visions and Revisions” (twenty-first century). These rubrics highlight the various ways Native literatures have evolved alongside major transitions in federal policy toward the Indian, and via contact with broader cultural phenomena such as the American Civil Rights movement. There is a balance between a history of canonical authors and traditions, introducing less-studied works and themes, and foregrounding critical discussions, approaches, and controversies.

MELANIE BENSON TAYLOR is Professor of Native American Studies at Dartmouth College, where she teaches courses in American, US southern, and Indigenous literature and film. She is the author of *Disturbing Calculations: The Economics of Identity in Postcolonial Southern Literature, 1912–2002* (2008), *Reconstructing the Native South: American Indian Literature and the Lost Cause* (2012), and a new monograph called *The Indian in American Southern Literature* (2020). She is executive editor of *Native South* and serves on the advisory boards of *The Southern Quarterly*, *The Faulkner Journal*, and the Digital Yoknapatawpha project.

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Edited by

MELANIE BENSON TAYLOR
Dartmouth College, New Hampshire



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Contributors

CHADWICK ALLEN is author of the books *Blood Narrative: Indigenous Identity in American Indian and Maori Literary and Activist Texts* (2002) and *Trans-Indigenous: Methodologies for Global Native Literary Studies* (2012). He is co-editor, with Beth Piatote, of *The Society of American Indians and Its Legacies* (a special combined issue of the journals *Studies in American Indian Literatures* and *American Indian Quarterly*, 2013). A professor of English and American Indian Studies at the University of Washington, he served as editor of *Studies in American Indian Literatures* between 2012 and 2017, and as the 2013–14 president of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA).

ERIC GARY ANDERSON is Associate Professor of English at George Mason University, where he teaches Native and southern studies and directs the interdisciplinary minor in Native American and Indigenous Studies. In addition to his book *American Indian Literature and the Southwest* (1999), he has published many essays in edited volumes and scholarly journals including, most recently, contributions to *Native South*, *The Oxford Handbook of the Literature of the U.S. South* (2016), and *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*. Along with Taylor Hagood and Daniel Cross Turner, he is co-editor of *Undead Souths: The Gothic and Beyond in Southern Literature and Culture* (2015).

BENJAMIN BALTHASER's scholarship, teaching, and creative work investigates the relationships among social movements, racial identity, and cultural production. His 2016 book *Anti-Imperialist Modernism: Race and Transnational Radical Culture from the Great Depression to the Cold War* explores the connections between cross-border, anti-imperialist movements and the making of modernist culture at mid-century. Balthaser's critical and creative work has appeared or is forthcoming in journals and publications such as *American Quarterly*, *Boston Review*, *The Oxford History of the Novel in English*, *Criticism*, *Cultural Logic*, *Jacobin*, *Minnesota Review*, *Massachusetts Review*.

List of Contributors

RALPH BAUER is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Maryland, College Park. His publications include *The Cultural Geography of Colonial American Literatures: Empire, Travel, Modernity* (Cambridge University Press 2003, 2008); *An Inca Account of the Conquest of Peru* (2005); *Creole Subjects in the Colonial Americas: Empires, Texts, Identities* (co-edited with José Antonio Mazzotti, 2009); and *Entangled Trajectories: Indigenous and European histories*, a special issue of *Latin American Review* 26 (co-edited with Marcy Norton, Spring 2017), and *The Alchemy of Conquest: Science, Religion, and the Secrets of the New World* (2019).

KEELY BYARS-NICHOLS is Associate Professor and department chair at the University of Mount Olive. Her current research areas are in critical food studies, American literature and composition studies. Her book, *The Black Indian in American Literature*, was published in 2013. Other recent work has been published in *Howling for Justice: New Perspectives in Leslie Marmon Silko's Almanac of the Dead* (2014) and *Narratives of Educating for Sustainability in Unsustainable Environments* (2018).

JODI A. BYRD is a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation and Associate Professor of English and Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where she is also a faculty affiliate at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications. She is the author of *Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (2011) and her articles have appeared in *American Indian Quarterly*, *Cultural Studies Review*, *Interventions*, *J19*, *College Literatures*, *Settler Colonial Studies*, and *American Quarterly*. Her teaching and research focuses on issues of indigeneity, gender, and sexuality at the intersections of political studies, postcolonial studies, queer studies, critical technology studies, and comparative ethnic studies.

ERIC CHEYFITZ is the Ernest I. White Professor of American Studies and Humane Letters at Cornell University and a member of the faculty and former director of the American Indian and Indigenous Studies Program. He is the author of four books, two edited collections, and over forty published articles. His latest book is *The Disinformation Age: The Collapse of Liberal Democracy in the United States* (2019). His current work focuses on the intersection of Palestinian and Native American resistance to colonialism; and on the importance of Indigenous philosophies in addressing the global capitalist crisis of income inequality and climate change.

JAMES H. COX holds the Jane and Roland Blumberg Centennial Professorship in English at the University of Texas at Austin. He has published three books on

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Native American literature from 1920 to the present, and co-edited *The Oxford Handbook of Indigenous American Literature* (2014) with Daniel Heath Justice of the University of British Columbia. The *Handbook* won the 2017 Modern Language Association Prize for Studies in Native American Literatures, Cultures, and Languages. He served as the co-editor of *Studies in American Indian Literatures* from 2007 to 2012 and has served as the co-editor of *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* since 2016.

BIRGIT DÄWES is Professor and Chair of American Studies at the University of Flensburg, Germany. Next to her award-winning monograph study on *Native North American Theater in a Global Age* (2007), she wrote *Ground Zero Fiction: History, Memory, and Representation in the American 9/11 Novel* (2011) and has edited or co-edited volumes such as *Indigenous North American Drama: A Multivocal History* (2013) and *Native American Survivance, Memory, and Futurity: The Gerald Vizenor Continuum* (2016). She is co-founder and co-editor of the Routledge book series *Research in Transnational Indigenous Perspectives*.

KATE FLINT is Provost Professor of Art History and English at the University of Southern California. She has published *The Woman Reader, 1837–1914* (1993), *The Victorians and The Visual Imagination* (2000), *The Transatlantic Indian 1776–1930* (2008), and *Flash! Photography, Writing, and Surprising Illumination* (2017). Editor of the *Cambridge History of Victorian Literature* (2012), she has written widely on Victorian and modernist fiction, Victorian and early twentieth-century painting and photography, transatlantic studies, and cultural history. She is currently working on nineteenth-century attentive looking, the everyday natural world, and the connections to be drawn with environmental art practices today.

KU‘UALOHA HO‘OMANAWANUI is a Kanaka Maoli scholar, poet, artist, and mālama ‘āina advocate, and a professor of Hawaiian literature in the English Department at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. Her research and teaching specialties are Native Hawaiian and Pacific literatures, and her current research and writing focuses on Native Hawaiian poetics, rhetorics, and aesthetics. She is the founding and current chief editor of *‘Ōiwi: A Native Hawaiian Journal*. Her first book, *Voices of Fire: Reweaving the Lei of Pele and Hi‘iaka Literature*, was published by the University of Minnesota Press in May 2014 and won honorable mention in the 2017 MLA (Modern Language Association) award for best new Indigenous scholarship. She is currently developing *Ka Ipu o Lono*, a Native Hawaiian literature digital humanities

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archive and database through the University of Hawai‘i’s Digital Arts and Humanities Initiative (DAHI).

SHARI M. HUHNDORF is Class of 1938 Professor of Native American Studies in the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the author of two books, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination* (2001) and *Mapping the Americas: The Transnational Politics of Contemporary Native Culture* (2009), and a co-editor of three volumes, including *Indigenous Women and Feminism: Politics, Activism, Culture* (2010), winner of the Canadian Women’s Studies Association prize for Outstanding Scholarship. In 2018 she was awarded a John Simon Memorial Guggenheim Fellowship for her work on her current book project, “Indigeneity and the Politics of Space: Gender, Geography, Culture.”

STEPHEN GRAHAM JONES is the author of sixteen novels, six story collections, and, so far, one comic book. He has been an NEA recipient, has won the Texas Institute of Letters Award for Fiction, the Independent Publishers Award for Multicultural Fiction, a Bram Stoker Award, a few This is Horror Awards, and has been a finalist for the Shirley Jackson Award on several occasions. He has also made *Bloody Disgusting’s* Top Ten Horror Novels. Stephen lives in Boulder, Colorado.

A. ROBERT LEE, formerly of the University of Kent at Canterbury, UK, retired as Professor of American Literature at Nihon University, Tokyo in 2011. His publications include *Designs of Blackness: Mappings in The Literature and Culture of Afro-America* (1998); *Multicultural American Literature: Comparative Black, Native, Latino/a and Asian American Fictions* (2003), which won the 2004 American Book Award; *United States: Re-Viewing American Multicultural Literature* (2009); *Gothic to Multicultural: Idioms of Imagining in American Literary Fiction* (2009) and *Modern American Counter Writing: Beats, Outriders, Ethnics* (2010); and *The Beats: Authorships, Legacies* (2019). He also edited *Native American Writing*, 4 vols. (2011) and *The Routledge Handbook of International Beat Literature* (2018). A frequent visiting professor in the USA, he played a founding part in establishing American studies in the UK. Currently he lives in Murcia, Spain.

GESA MACKENTHUN is Professor of American Studies at Rostock University, Germany. Her publications include *Metaphors of Dispossession: American Beginnings and the Translation of Empire, 1492–1637* (1997), *Fictions of the Black Atlantic in American Foundational Literature* (2004), and *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean* (co-edited with Bernhard Klein, 2004). The graduate school “Cultural Encounters and the Discourses of Scholarship,” which she founded (2006–15),

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led to the publication of seven research volumes, including *Entangled Knowledge. Scientific Discourses and Cultural Difference* (2012) and *DEcolonial Heritage* (2018). She is currently completing a monograph analyzing the political implications of discourses about American antiquity, *Embattled Excavations. Colonial and Transcultural Constructions of the American Deep Past*.

DEBORAH MADSEN, Professor of American Literature and Culture at the University of Geneva, Switzerland, is the editor of the *Routledge Companion to Native American Literature* (2015). She is an associate editor of the journal *Contemporary Women's Writing*, immediate past president of the Swiss Association for North American Studies (SANAS), and has served on the editorial board of the *Encyclopedia of American Studies*, as well as the Editorial Advisory Committee of *PMLA*. Her recent publications address intersections between Indigenous virtual media and aesthetic activism. In 2006 she co-edited, with Michael Hanrahan, *Textuality, Teaching and Technology*, in Palgrave's Teaching the New English series; some of her early work on hypertext and digital media appeared in *Computers and Texts* (1996) and *Innovations in Teaching English and Textual Studies* (1999).

SOPHIE MCCALL is Associate Professor in the English department at Simon Fraser University. She is the author of *First Person Plural: Aboriginal Storytelling and the Ethics of Collaborative Authorship* (2011), and a finalist for the Gabrielle Roy Prize for English Canadian literary criticism and the Canada Prize from the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. She is editor of Anahareo's *Devil in Deerskins* (2014), the first book-length life narrative published by an Indigenous woman author in Canada. She is also co-editor, with L'Hirondelle Hill, of *The Land We Are: Artists and Writers Unsettle the Politics of Reconciliation* (2015), and with Deanna Reder (Cree-Métis), David Gaertner, and Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill (Métis), of *Read, Listen, Tell: Indigenous Stories from Turtle Island* (2017).

LAURA L. MIELKE is Dean's Professor of English at the University of Kansas. She is the author of *Moving Encounters: Sympathy and the Indian Question in Antebellum Literature* (2008), which was the co-winner of the 2009 Byron Caldwell Smith Book Award and a 2009 Choice "Outstanding Academic Title," and *Provocative Eloquence: Theatre, Violence, and Anti-Slavery Speech in the Antebellum U.S.* (2019). In 2011 Mielke co-edited, with Joshua David Bellin, the volume *Native Acts: Indian Performance, 1607–1823*.

ROBERT DALE PARKER is the Frank Hodgins Professor in English at the University of Illinois. He has published widely on Native American literature,

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including *The Invention of Native American Literature* (2003), *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing through the Sky: The Writings of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft* (2007), and *Changing Is Not Vanishing: A Collection of American Indian Poetry to 1930* (2011). His other books include *How to Interpret Literature: Critical Theory for Literary and Cultural Studies* (2020) as well as two books on William Faulkner and one on Elizabeth Bishop.

NANCY J. PETERSON, a professor of English at Purdue University, focuses on contemporary American literature and culture in her research and teaching, with a particular interest in ethnic literatures and Native studies. She is the author of *Against Amnesia: Contemporary Women Writers and the Crises of Historical Memory* (2001) and *Beloved: Character Studies* (2008) and the editor of *Toni Morrison: Critical and Theoretical Approaches* (1997) and *Conversations with Sherman Alexie* (2009). She has published articles on Leslie Marmon Silko, Sherman Alexie, Toni Morrison, and Louise Erdrich in *MELUS*, *Mfs: Modern Fiction Studies*, and *PMLA*, as well as a range of edited collections. Currently she is at work on several longer projects, including a co-edited collection on Louise Erdrich's justice trilogy.

BETH H. PIATOTE is author of the scholarly monograph *Domestic Subjects: Gender, Citizenship, and Law in Native American Literature* (2013), the short fiction collection *The Beadworkers: Stories* (2019), and numerous essays in scholarly journals and anthologies. She is Associate Professor of Comparative Literature and Native American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, where she specializes in Native American literature, law, and history; Nez Perce language and literature; Indigenous language revitalization; and creative writing. She is Nez Perce enrolled with Colville Confederated Tribes.

DEAN RADER's scholarly books, include *Engaged Resistance: Contemporary American Indian Art, Literature, and Film from Alcatraz to the NMAI* (2011), which won the Beatrice Medicine Award for Excellence in American Indian Scholarship and *Speak to Me Words: Essays on Contemporary American Indian Poetry* (edited with Janice Gould, 2001). Along with Cindy Fuhrman, he is the editor of *Native Voices: An Anthology of Indigenous Poetry and Craft* (Tupelo, 2018). Rader's most recent collection of poems is *Self-Portrait as Wikipedia Entry* (Copper Canyon, 2017). He is a professor at the University of San Francisco.

OLIVER SCHEIDING is Professor of American Literature and Early American Studies in the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies at the

List of Contributors

University of Mainz, Germany. His research focuses on literary markets, periodical studies, and the socio-materiality of literature. He is author of *Worlding America: A Transnational Anthology of Short Narratives before 1800* (2015), which documents the traffic of short forms of narration in the early Americas and published the monograph *The Early American Novel* in 2003. He also co-edited *A Peculiar Mixture: German-Language Cultures and Identities in Eighteenth-Century North America* (2013). He edited the journal *Amerikastudien – American Studies* on behalf of the German Association of American Studies (2011–19). Currently, he is working on a manuscript tentatively titled “Reading Magazines: Materiality, Networks, and Agency.”

PAUL CHAAT SMITH is a Comanche author, essayist, and curator. His Smithsonian exhibitions include James Luna’s *Emendatio, Fritz Scholder: Indian/Not Indian*, *Brian Jungen: Strange Comfort*, and *Americans*. He is the author of *Everything You Know about Indians Is Wrong* (2009) and (with Robert Warrior) *Like a Hurricane: the Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (1996). Although he spends most of his time crafting game-changing exhibitions and texts, he also enjoys reading obsessively about the early days of the Soviet space program, watching massive amounts of televised sports, and writing about himself in the third person.

LISA TATONETTI is Professor of English at Kansas State University where she studies, teaches, and publishes on queer Indigenous literatures. She is the author of *The Queerness of Native American Literature* (2014), which won the 2015 Thomas J. Lyons Book Award and is on the ALA 2016 Over the Rainbow Recommended Reading List, and co-editor of the award-winning *Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literature* (2011). She is completing her current book manuscript, “Indigenous Knowledges Written by the Body” while on a Rockefeller Fellowship at the National Humanities Center.

MELANIE BENSON TAYLOR is Professor of Native American Studies at Dartmouth College. She is the author of *Disturbing Calculations: The Economics of Identity in Postcolonial Southern Literature, 1912–2002* (2008), *Reconstructing the Native South: American Indian Literature and the Lost Cause* (2012), and a new monograph *The Indian in American Southern Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 2020). She is executive editor of the journal *Native South* and serves on the advisory boards of *The Southern Quarterly*, *The Faulkner Journal*, and the Digital Yoknapatawpha project.

DAVID TREUER is Ojibwe from the Leech Lake Reservation in northern Minnesota. He is the author of six books and the recipient of a Guggenheim

List of Contributors

Fellowship and grants from the American Philosophical Society, and the Bush Foundation. His work regularly appears in the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. He divides his time between Los Angeles and the Leech Lake Reservation.

HERTHA D. SWEET WONG is Professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley. Author of *Sending My Heart Back across the Years: Tradition and Innovation in Native American Autobiography* (1992), she has written numerous articles on Indigenous literature and art. She edited *Louise Erdrich's "Love Medicine": A Casebook* (2000) and co-edited *Reckonings: Contemporary Short Fiction by Native American Women* (2008) and *Family of Earth and Sky: Indigenous Tales of Nature from around the World* (1994). Her latest book, *Picturing Identity: Contemporary American Autobiography in Image and Text* (2018) examines twentieth- and twenty-first-century American subjectivity as it is represented in visual-verbal forms.

HILARY E. WYSS is the Allan K. Smith and Gwendolyn Miles Smith Professor of English at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. She is the author of over a dozen articles and several books, including *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America* (2000) and *English Letters and Indian Literacies: Reading, Writing, and New England Missionary Schools, 1750–1830* (2012); and with Kristina Bross, *Early Native Literacies in New England: A Documentary and Critical Anthology* (2008). She served as president of the Society of Early Americanists from 2011 to 2013 and has been on the editorial board of the journals *Early American Literature* and *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*.