

## RECLAIMING JOHN STEINBECK

John Steinbeck is a towering figure in twentieth-century American literature; yet, he remains one of our least understood writers. This major reevaluation of Steinbeck by Gavin Jones uncovers a timely thinker who confronted the fate of humanity as a species facing climate change, environmental crisis, and a growing divide between the powerful and the marginalized. Driven by insatiable curiosity, Steinbeck's work crossed a variety of borders – between the United States and the Global South, between human and nonhuman life-forms, between science and the arts, and between literature and film – to explore the transformations in consciousness necessary for our survival on a precarious planet. Always seeking new forms to express his ecological and social vision of human interconnectedness and vulnerability, Steinbeck is a writer of urgent concern for the twenty-first century, even as he was haunted by the legacies of racism and injustice in the American West.

GAVIN JONES is the Frederick P. Rehmus Family Professor of the Humanities at Stanford University, where he has taught American literature since 1999. He is the author of *Strange Talk: The Politics of Dialect Literature in Gilded Age America* (University of California Press, 1999), *American Hungers: The Problem of Poverty in US Literature, 1840–1945* (Princeton University Press, 2008), and *Failure and the American Writer: A Literary History* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

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STEINBECK

*Writing for the Future of Humanity*

GAVIN JONES  
*Stanford University*



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*For My Teachers, Especially John Comerford, Val Skinner,  
Nigel Smith, and Hans Aarsleff*

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