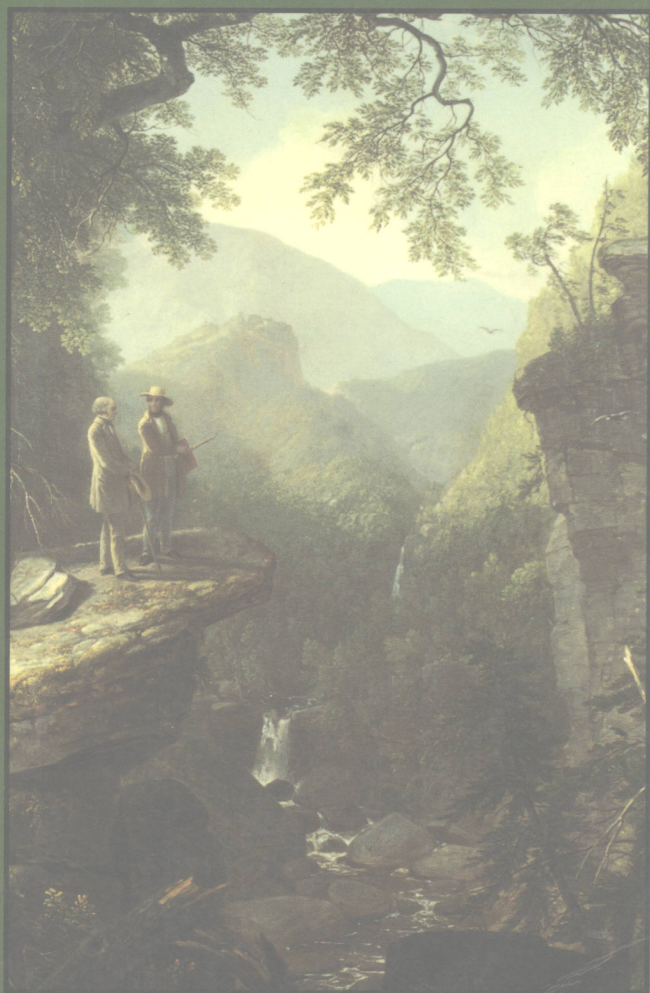


The Norton Anthology

AMERICAN LITERATURE



Fourth Edition • Volume 1

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The Norton Anthology of American Literature

FOURTH EDITION
VOLUME 1



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Preface to the Fourth Edition

From its inception, a guiding principle of *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* has been to provide a balanced combination of traditional and emergent works. Like all Norton anthologies, the Fourth Edition reflects an ongoing collaboration among the teachers who assign the book, the students who read it, and the editors; the major changes in its contents have been made in response to detailed suggestions from nearly 150 reviewers of the preceding edition.

In response to significant changes in critical interest, the Fourth Edition introduces two major innovations. An entirely new section, *Literature to 1620*, gathers the writings of encounter—the journals and letters of the first European explorers. Texts such as Columbus's *Letter to Luis de Santangel* and Arthur Barlowe's *First Voyage Made to the Coast of America* bear witness to the natural wonders of the New World, a tradition that has remained strong in American writing ever since. At the same time, the literature of encounter tells of violence and devastation; texts such as Bernal Díaz del Castillo's *True History of the Conquest of New Spain* detail with grim force the brutality of the Spanish conquest of Mexico; and the writings of the soldier-entrepreneur John Smith (moved to this section with other chroniclers of exploration) and the aristocrat George Percy describe the harsh conditions of life in the early settlement of Jamestown.

Literature to 1620 also introduces the second major innovation in the Fourth Edition—the greatly increased attention to Native American oral and written traditions. The first of three new sections of oral materials, *Stories of the Beginning of the World*, includes creation stories from the Iroquois and the Pima. Headnotes here give special attention to the political, cultural, and linguistic complexities of transcription and translation.

Changes in critical and classroom interest have also led to innovations in every period of the anthology.

Early American Literature 1620–1820. Notable additions are the Quaker John Woolman's *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes*, and five letters by Phillis Wheatley that reveal the strength of her opposition to slavery. Countering the myth of the pastoral New World, a selection from Crèvecoeur's *Letter X, On Snakes; and on the Humming Bird*, shows a view of Nature as distinctly “red in tooth and claw.” Newly anthologized is the Mohegan missionary Samson Occom, whose fervent *Sermon at the Execution of Moses Paul*, exhorting Indians to temperance, appeared in no fewer than nineteen editions after its publication.

American Literature 1820–1865. The additions to this great period enlarge instructors' options by expanding the kinds of texts offered. A powerful defense of the sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation, the *Memorials of the Cherokees* link the Native American oratorical tradition to the Euro-American tradition of political protest writing. A chapter from William Apess's biographical work, *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians of the Pequot Tribe*, asserts that those who profess Christianity must also uphold racial equality, an argument from faith that resounds in Frederick Douglass's brilliant speech *The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro*, newly anthologized. Six chapters from Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* convey the drama of Linda Brent's bondage and escape, as well as Jacobs's skillful use of melodrama in the cause of abolition. The period 1820–1865 also includes notable additions to two major authors. Freshly collated from manuscript is Walt Whitman's poem-sequence *Live Oak, with Moss*, celebrating sexual "adhesiveness" of man for man. These poems are here restored to Whitman's first and most personal ordering. The headnote to Emily Dickinson has been entirely rewritten and appropriately expanded; her poetry has been enriched with twenty-seven new poems that reveal both her growing self-awareness as a poet and her sense of connection to other poets and writers—Shakespeare, the Brownings, the Brontës.

American Literature 1865–1914. The additions to this section strengthen the offerings by a number of women writers. Charlotte Perkins Gilman's brief *Why I Wrote "The Yellow Wallpaper"* provides a companion piece for that haunting work. Kate Chopin's evocative short stories *At the 'Cadian Ball* and *The Storm* are now included along with the complete *Awakening*. Mary Austin, an original and fiercely independent writer who has recently come into her own, is newly anthologized with *The Walking Woman*. Building on the Native American works in Volume 1, this section includes two new Native American writers: the Dartmouth-educated Sioux physician Charles Alexander Eastman, represented by selections from his autobiography *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*, and John M. Oskison, whose short story *The Problem of Old Harjo* captures the irony of the Christian campaign to "uplift" Native Americans. The attention to the Native American oral tradition is also carried forward in Volume 2, where two new sections—Native American Oratory and Native American Chants and Songs—provide a rich introduction to several complex forms. While the selections from *The Night Chant* and the Chippewa and Ghost Dance songs may be read simply as poems in translation, to underscore their essential role as *performances* we accompany the texts with music notation and a period drawing illustrating the dance.

American Literature between the Wars 1914–1945. The outpouring between the wars of political poetry by women and African-American poets, eclipsed in the academy by High Modernism, is now significantly recovered with the inclusion of Muriel Rukeyser, Angelina Weld Grimké, Genevieve Taggard, and Sterling Brown. The prominent imagist Amy Lowell is newly anthologized, as is Anzia Yezierska, represented by her sharply observed story of immigrant life on the Lower East Side, *The Lost "Beautifulness."* Poems by Marianne Moore, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Langston Hughes have been reselected to better show these poets' range and variety.

American Prose since 1945. A major figure in the Native American Renaissance, N. Scott Momaday is newly represented with selections chosen to show

the "arc" of *The Way to Rainy Mountain*. Strengthening our offering of modern American drama, already unsurpassed, we now add to Eugene O'Neill, Tennessee Williams, and Arthur Miller two major playwrights: August Wilson, with his powerful family drama *Fences*, and David Mamet, whose hard-edged *House of Games* introduces to the anthology an increasingly important literary form: the screenplay.

American Poetry since 1945. As the introduction to this section observes, "What best characterizes the world of contemporary American poetry is its pluralism and the power of its best poets to absorb a variety of influences." This widely praised section has been updated with new poems by Gwendolyn Brooks, Philip Levine, Adrienne Rich, Lorna Dee Cervantes, and Rita Dove. Two new poets have been added: the influential early experimentalist George Oppen, and the vibrant and contemporary Li-Young Lee.

Teaching with The Norton Anthology of American Literature: A Guide for Instructors, by Marjorie Pryse, makes available to instructors teaching notes and suggested essay topics and exam questions for works in the anthology, as well as class plans for a variety of approaches to the survey course. Also available, for instructors who teach Whitman and Dickinson in the second part of a two-semester survey, are student copies of a supplemental pamphlet, *Selections from Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson*. Information for ordering the pamphlet or the *Guide for Instructors* (in either print or disk versions) may be obtained from the publisher.

It will be clear from the foregoing that, in compiling the Fourth Edition, we have also held fast to two other important principles. First, teachers are offered more authors and more selections than they will have time to teach. Such copiousness is designed to allow flexibility within any course and variety from year to year. Second, on the principle of making the anthology self-sufficient—thereby minimizing the frustration of having to teach excerpts, and eliminating the need for costly supplements—we include many long works in their entirety, all of them notable achievements in American literature. In the Third Edition these ranged from Rowlandson's captivity narrative to Miller's *Death of a Salesman*; added to these in the Fourth Edition are Wilson's full-length drama and Mamet's screenplay.

Readers already familiar with the anthology will have noticed that the present edition retains the larger trim size of its predecessor, which allows the volume, even in its middle section, to open out and stay flat. It retains, too, the page design and line-length that allow maximum ease of reading. The format is that of a book to be read for pleasure; the text is inviting to the eye, and the special paper makes it possible to keep each volume to a size and weight that allow it to be easily carried to a classroom.

Similarly, this edition continues to incorporate the editorial features that have established a standard in the classroom. The introductions, headnotes, and footnotes are concise but full and are designed to give the student the information needed, without preempting the interpretive function of the student or of the instructor. The Selected Bibliographies at the end of each volume provide guides to further readings and research and complete the self-sufficiency of the anthology, which permits each of its selections to be read, understood, and placed in historical context without dependence on reference books.

The editors have taken scrupulous care to represent the most accurate avail-

able version of each work. Indeed, several of the major texts—Franklin's *Autobiography*, some of the materials by Clemens, and Howells's *Novel-Writing and Novel-Reading*—were edited from manuscript. Among the standard editions used in the Fourth Edition are those of Philip Barbour for John Smith, John Bierhorst for *The Night Chant*, Louis Martz for H. D., Marc Simon for Hart Crane, and Francis E. Skipp for Thomas Wolfe.

Our policy has been to reprint each text in the form that accords, as far as it is possible to determine, to the intention of its author. There is one exception: we have modernized most spellings and (very sparingly) the punctuation in the sections Literature to 1620 and Early American Literature 1620–1820, on the principle that nonfunctional features such as archaic spellings and typography pose unnecessary problems for beginning students. We have, however, since it is a new edition from the manuscript, left Franklin's *Autobiography* unchanged. For the convenience of the student, we have used square brackets to indicate titles supplied by the editors and have, whenever a portion of a text has been omitted, indicated that omission with three asterisks. To ensure the accuracy of all texts, the Fourth Edition has been proofread in its entirety against copy text.

The editors of this anthology were selected on the basis of their expertness in their individual areas. They combine respect for the best that has been thought and said about literature with alertness (as participants, as well as observers) to the altering interests of contemporary scholarship and criticism. Each editor was given ultimate responsibility for his or her period, but all collaborated in the final enterprise. New contributors to the Fourth Edition, Wayne Franklin edited Literature to 1620, and Arnold Krupat edited Native American Literatures, in Volume One and the oratory, songs and chants, Eastman, and Oskison selections in Volume Two. In the 1820–1865 section, Ronald Gottesman prepared the texts and introductions for Lincoln, Stowe, and Douglass; and Nina Baym prepared the text and introduction for Harriet Jacobs.

In preparing these volumes, we have incurred obligations to hundreds of teachers throughout the country who have answered our questions; we take this opportunity to thank them warmly for their invaluable assistance. Those teachers who prepared detailed critiques, or who offered special help in selecting or preparing texts, are listed under Acknowledgments, on a separate page. The editors would like to express appreciation for their assistance to Kevin Affonso, Olivia Banner, Mark Canner, Daniel Chiasson, Joseph Coulombe, Sarah Hurley, Sharon Lee, Ted Loos, Thomas Osmond, Rilla Park, Heddy Richter, Danny Rose, Beth Shube, and Stellene Vollandes.

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