



THE NORTON
ANTHOLOGY
AMERICAN
LITERATURE

1914-1945

VOLUME D



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THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF

AMERICAN LITERATURE

EIGHTH EDITION

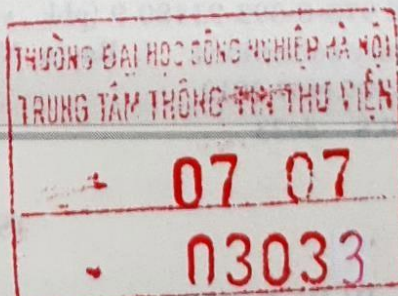
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Preface to the Eighth Edition

This edition of *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* is the last for me as General Editor, and I am delighted to announce that Robert S. Levine, the editor of Volume B, will take over as General Editor for the next and subsequent editions. Here he joins me as Associate Editor; together we have continued the work for which Norton has achieved its leading position among American literature anthologies. It has been a great pleasure to work on this anthology, to make contact with teachers and students around the country—indeed around the world. I know I leave *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* in immensely capable hands.

From the anthology's inception in 1979, the editors have had three main aims: first, to present a rich and substantial enough variety of works to enable teachers to build courses according to their own ideals (thus, teachers are offered more authors and more selections than they will probably use in any one course); second, to make the anthology self-sufficient by featuring many works in their entirety along with extensive selections for individual authors; third, to balance traditional interests with developing critical concerns in a way that points to a coherent American literary history. As early as 1979, we anthologized work by Anne Bradstreet, Mary Rowlandson, Sarah Kemble Knight, Phillis Wheatley, Margaret Fuller, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Frederick Douglass, Sarah Orne Jewett, Kate Chopin, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, Booker T. Washington, Charles Chesnutt, Edith Wharton, W. E. B. Du Bois, and other writers who were not yet part of a standard canon. Yet we never shortchanged writers like Franklin, Emerson, Whitman, Hawthorne, Melville, Dickinson, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Faulkner, whose work students expected to read in their American literature courses, and whom teachers then and now would not think of doing without.

Although the so-called canon wars of the 1980s and 1990s have subsided, they initiated a review of our understanding of American literature that has enlarged the number and diversity of authors now recognized as contributors to the totality of American literature. The traditional writers, who look different in this expanded context, also appear different according to which of their works are selected. Teachers and students remain committed to the idea of the literary—that writers strive to produce artifacts that are both intellectually serious and formally skillful—but believe more than ever that writers should also be understood in relation to their cultural and historical situations. In endeavoring to do justice to these complex realities, we have worked, as in previous editions, with detailed suggestions from many teachers and, through those teachers, the students who use the anthology. Thanks