



A History of American Poetry

By Richard Gray

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A History of American Poetry presents a comprehensive exploration of the development of American poetic traditions from their pre-Columbian origins to the present day.

- Offers a detailed and accessible account of the entire range of American poetry
- Situates the story of American poetry within crucial social and historical contexts, and places individual poets and poems in the relevant intertextual contexts
- Explores and interprets American poetry in terms of the international positioning and multicultural character of the United States
- Provides readers with a means to understand the individual works and personalities that helped to shape one of the most significant bodies of literature of the past few centuries

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Editorial Review

Review

“In his preface to this work, Richard Gray says that he has “tried to be faithful to the sheer range and plurality of the American poetic tradition,” and much the most impressive feature of this work is the “sheer range” of authors it covers. Extending from Philip Freneau at the end of the eighteenth century to emerging Asian-American poets at the beginning of the twenty-first, this book offers the reader a compendious, almost encyclopaedic range, which treats every facet of American poetry ... Gray writes fluently and with stylistic brio about a very large range of American poets, and he manages to convey a strong sense not only of his commitment to this field but also his enjoyment of it.”—*Paul Giles, University of Sydney*

“Richard Gray's *History of American Poetry* has great appeal for both specialized scholars and general readers. Gray's lucid prose style and sensitive analyses allow us to gain valuable insights into American poetry seen within its historical context.”—*Susan Castillo, King's College London*

From the Back Cover

A History of American Poetry presents a comprehensive exploration of the development of American poetic traditions from their pre-Columbian origins to the present day. Richard Gray, one of the leading authorities on American literature, situates the story of American poetry within the historical, political, cultural, and societal contexts that contributed to shaping the genre. Through close readings of individual poems, Gray reveals how American poetry evolved to reflect the rich diversity and multicultural character of the United States. While the primary focus is on poetry of the 20th- and 21st-centuries, numerous formative and influential figures from the colonial and revolutionary eras through the 19th century are not overlooked, with coverage of voices ranging from Edward Taylor, Anne Bradstreet, and Phillis Wheatley to Poe, Whitman, and Dickinson. Presenting the full breadth of American poetry in an accessible and engagingly written manner, *A History of American Poetry* is an invaluable guide to all facets of this essential component of the nation's rich literary heritage.

About the Author

Richard Gray has been Professor or Distinguished Visiting Professor at several universities in the UK and USA, including Essex, Georgia and South Carolina. He is the first specialist in American literature to be elected a Fellow of the British Academy and has published over a dozen books on the topic, including the award-winning *Writing the South: Ideas of an American Region* (1986) and *The Life of William Faulkner: A Critical Biography* (1994).

Users Review

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