



# From Puritanism to Postmodernism: A History of American Literature

By Malcolm Bradbury, Richard Ruland

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From Modernist/Postmodernist perspective, leading critics Richard Ruland (American) and Malcolm Bradbury (British) address questions of literary and cultural nationalism. They demonstrate that since the seventeenth century, American writing has reflected the political and historical climate of its time and helped define America's cultural and social parameters. Above all, they argue that American literature has always been essentially "modern," illustrating this with a broad range of texts: from Poe and Melville to Fitzgerald and Pound, to Wallace Stevens, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Thomas Pynchon.

From *Puritanism to Postmodernism* pays homage to the luxuriance of American writing by tracing the creation of a national literature that retained its deep roots in European culture while striving to achieve cultural independence.

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### Editorial Review

#### About the Author

Malcolm Bradbury is a novelist, critic, television dramatist and Emeritus Professor of American Studies at the University of East Anglia. He is author of the novels *Eating People is Wrong* (1959); *Stepping Westward* (1965); *The History Man* (1975); which won the Royal Society of Literature Heinemann Prize and was adapted as a famous television series; *Rates of Exchange* (1983) which was shortlisted for the Booker Prize; *Cuts: A Very Short Novel* (1987), also televised; and *Doctor Criminales* (1992). His critical works include *The Modern American Novel* (1984; revised edition, 1992); *No, Not Bloomsbury* (essays, 1987); *The Modern world: Ten Great Writers* (1988); *From Puritanism to Post-modernism: A History of American Literature* (with Richard Ruland, 1991). He is the author of a collection of seven stories and nine parodies, entitled *Who Do You Think You Are?* (1976), and of several works of humour and satire, including *Why Come to Slaka?* (1986), *Unsent Letters* (1988; revised edition, 1995) and *Mensonge* (1987). Many of his books are published by Penguin. In addition, he has written many television plays and the television 'novel' *The Gravy Train* and *The Gravy Train Goes East*. He has adapted several television series, including Tom Sharpe's *Porterhouse Blue*, Kingsley Amis's *The Green Man* and Stella Gibbons' *Cold Comfort Farm*, now a feature film.

Malcolm Bradbury lives in Norwich, travels good deal, and in 1991 he was awarded the CBE.

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