Contents

Preface and Acknowledgments ix

1 The First Americans: American Literature During the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods 1
   Imagining Eden 1
   Writing of the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods 1

2 Inventing Americas: The Making of American Literature 1800–1865 47
   Making a Nation 47
   The Making of American Myths 47
   The Making of American Selves 59
   The Making of Many Americas 71
   The Making of an American Fiction and Poetry 90

3 Reconstructing the Past, Reimagining the Future: The Development of American Literature 1865–1900 115
   Rebuilding a Nation 115
   The Development of Literary Regionalisms 115
   The Development of Literary Realism and Naturalism 130
   The Development of Women’s Writing 143
   The Development of Many Americas 148

4 Making It New: The Emergence of Modern American Literature 1900–1945 159
   Changing National Identities 159
   Between Victorianism and Modernism 159
   The Inventions of Modernism 176
   Traditionalism, Politics, and Prophecy 211
   Community and Identity 226
   Mass Culture and the Writer 242

5 Negotiating the American Century: American Literature since 1945 249
   Towards a Transnational Nation 249
   Formalists and Confessionals 249
   Public and Private Histories 263
   Beats, Prophets, and Aesthetes 281
Contents

The Art and Politics of Race 296
Realism and Its Discontents 314
Language and Genre 328
Creating New Americas 345

Index 373