



On Company Time: American Modernism in the Big Magazines (Modernist Latitudes)

Donal Harris

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Willa Cather, W. E. B. Du Bois, Jessie Fauset, James Agee, T. S. Eliot, and Ernest Hemingway all worked in the editorial offices of groundbreaking popular magazines while helping to invent the house styles that defined *McClure's*, *The Crisis*, *Time*, *Life*, *Esquire*, and more. *On Company Time* tells the story of American modernism from inside the offices and on the pages of the most successful and stylish magazines of the twentieth century. Working at the crossroads of media history, the sociology of literature, print culture, and literary studies, it demonstrates the profound institutional, economic, and aesthetic affiliations between modernism and American magazine culture.

Starting in the 1890s, a growing number of writers found steady paychecks and regular publishing opportunities working as editors and reporters in the expanding field of big magazines. Innovative style often outweighed late-breaking content, so novelists and poets were prized for their attention to literary craft. *On Company Time* challenges the narrative of decline that often accompanies modernism's incorporation into midcentury middlebrow culture. Its integrated history of literary and journalistic form shows American modernism evolving within mass print culture. Harris's work also provides a history of modernism that extends beyond narratives centered on little magazines and other "institutions of modernism" that had small budgets and served narrow audiences. And for the writers, the "double life" of working for these magazines shaped modernism's literary form and created new models of authorship.

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