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**North Carolina poet attempts to document American life  
via juxtaposition, history, and imagination**

PITTSBURGH—David Roderick’s second poetry collection, *The Americans*, pledges its allegiance to dirt. And to laptops. And to swimming pools, the Kennedys, a flower in a lapel, plastic stars hanging from the ceiling of a child’s room, churning locusts, a jar of blood, a gleam of sun on the wing of a plane. He also asks the question: *What does it mean to be an American?*

Restless against the borders we build—between countries, between each other—Roderick roams from place to place in order to dig into the messy, political, idealistic and ultimately inexplicable idea of American-ness. His rangy, inquisitive lyrics stitch together a patchwork flag, which he stakes alongside all the noise of our construction, our obsessive building and making, while he imagines the fate of a nation built on desire.

“*The Americans* is a compelling meditation on the ways we go about our lives at this cultural moment, often unmoored from the facts of history though we drift along its shores,” said U.S. Poet Laureate Natasha Trethewey. “Part complicated love letter to suburbia, these poems demand that we consider not only what we are drawn to but also what we fail to see, how the apocryphal feeds our cultural amnesia. The poet asks: *Must nostalgia / walk like a prince through all our rooms?* This lovely collection shows us a way to confront that question within ourselves.”

Roderick’s debut book of poems, *Blue Colonial*, won the APR/Honickman Prize. A former Wallace Stegner fellow, Roderick was awarded the Amy Lowell Travelling Scholarship, among other honors. He has published poetry and fiction in several journals, including the *Hudson Review*, the *Georgia Review*, *Indiana Review*, *New England Review*, *Poetry*, the *Southern Review*, *Slate*, and the *Virginia Quarterly Review*.

Poems from *The Americans* have won *Shenandoah’s* James Boatwright III Prize and the Campbell Corner Poetry Prize, sponsored by Sarah Lawrence College. Roderick is associate professor of English in the MFA Program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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*The Americans*, poems by David Roderick, is published by the University of Pittsburgh Press.  
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