



# Boats Against the Current

*Bevis Longstreth*

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## **Boats Against the Current** Bevis Longstreth

In luminous prose, this historical novel charts the struggles of six unforgettable lives braided together in the Great Depression, with FDR's New Deal and its Works Progress Administration serving as armature for the story.

Adam and Benno Murdock are twins of a deceased mother and Dan Murdock, a cattleman from Kansas. Each in his own way comes to terms with the politics of their father, who hates FDR and uses nationwide radio to attack the New Deal.

After law school, Adam is hired by Harry Hopkins, head of WPA. Benno becomes a sculptor, declines college and, rejected by Dan, moves to New York City, where he suffers poverty and unemployment.

The twins meet and engage in ways universal with Mariah Massie, from an aristocratic family in Richmond, Virginia, and Violet Long, a vocal and acting talent who escapes to New York City from the dusts of Dalhart, Texas. Rachel Bernstein, an Austrian psychiatrist who lands in Kansas, helps the twins come of age.

These fictional characters blend with many historical figures, including Hallie Flanagan, head of the WPA's famous Theatre Project, Huey Long, the tyrant from Louisiana, and William Allen White, the editor and owner of *The Emporia Gazette* in Kansas.

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