

# Critical Insights: American Writers in Exile

We seek essays of 5,000 to 6,000 words for an anthology that explores the work of some of the more popular and/or influential American writers in exile. While we understand the term “exile” to refer typically to American writers who have either been forced to leave the United States or, more commonly, chosen self-exile, this term need not be defined so narrowly. That is, the United States has long been a refuge for people and writers from many countries, and many of these writers have gone on to become recognized as “American” writers. Thus, in our view, the phrase “in exile” involves writers moving across borders in multiple directions and for multiple reasons, including for reasons of duress (official or personal) or personal quest. Besides the famous Paris years before, between, and after the world wars (which includes such writers as Sherwood Anderson, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, Richard Wright and many others), some writers commonly thought to be American writers in exile include James Baldwin, Ambrose Bierce, Elizabeth Bishop, William Burroughs, Hart Crane, John Dos Passos, T.S. Eliot, Janet Flanner, Washington Irving, Henry James, James Jones, Henry Miller, Anaïs Nin, Katherine Anne Porter, Sylvia Plath, Paul Theroux, Gore Vidal, Edith Wharton, Edmund White, Thomas Wolfe. Of course, this is necessarily a partial list and we urge you to consider other relevant, well-known writers.

In line with the expectations of the Critical Insights series, we seek essays that:

1. Provide undergraduate and advanced high school students with a comprehensive introduction to works and aspects of American writers in exile that they are likely to encounter, discuss, and study in their classrooms;
2. Help students build a foundation for studying the works and aspects in greater depth by introducing them to key concepts, contexts, critical approaches, and critical vocabulary found in the scholarship relating to American writers in exile.

Hopefully, this collection of, hopefully, transnational, globalized American studies envisions understanding the intersection of our contemporary world and various American writers in exile in new cultural, historical, spatial, and epistemological frameworks. How does literary production in an increasingly globalized world—when seen from exile—affect a view back towards an America left behind? Or, conversely, how does exile push a writer to look outward to new American space(s)? How does (do) your chosen text(s) construct the United States at/in/against the context of a globalized, dehumanizing, suffocating, and endless movement of goods and services and ideas across international boundaries? These and other questions you may believe are important to answer about American writers in exile will guide your proposal and, eventually, the final essays.

The volumes follow a uniform format, including four original introductory essays as follows:

\*a "critical lens" chapter (5,000 words; offers a close reading of the topic embodying a particular critical standpoint)

\*a "cultural and historical context" chapter (5,000 words; addresses how the subject at hand influences the theme(s) of American writers in exile across different time periods and cultures, as well as what makes the concept relevant to a contemporary audience)

\*a "compare/contrast" chapter (5,000 words; analyzes the topic of American writers in exile with regard to two or three different works, or authors, with some reference to the similarities and differences of their exile experiences contrasted with author(s) who did not leave the United States.)

\*a "critical reception" chapter (5,000 words; surveys major pieces of comment or criticism of the topic and the major concerns, or aspects, that commentators on the topic have attended to over the years)

The book will also include ten chapters that analyze the themes that pervade the experience of American writers in exile and focus specific attention on some of the best works and/or authors in the "genre." Each essay will be 5,000 words. Together, these chapters will offer readers a comprehensive introduction to the essential themes that arise from the lives and works of American writers in exile and reflect major critical approaches to the topic.

Writers are expected to:

Center their essays on works, topics, and critical approaches that are commonly studied at the advanced high school and undergraduate levels and are representative of foundational and mainstream critical discourse about American writers in exile. Topics and critical approaches should be neither dated, nor so cutting edge as to risk becoming dated in 5–10 years.

For the introductory **critical reception** and **cultural/historical context** essays, writers should not devote their essays to selective critical approaches or selective contexts. Rather, the introductory **critical reception** essay should offer readers a comprehensive overview of the body of criticism or comment on American writers in exile, and the introductory **cultural/historical context** should consider variety of contexts in which the topic is commonly situated.

Abstracts between 500 - 1000 words & CV by November 10, 2014 to:

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**Completed first drafts of 5,000 words will be expected by: January 19, 2015**