



American Naturalistic and Realistic Novelists: A Biographical Dictionary

Edd C. Applegate

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Realistic writers seek to render accurate representations of the world, and their novels contain authentic details and descriptions of their characters and settings. Like Realistic authors, Naturalistic ones similarly try to portray the world accurately, but they tend to depict the darker side of life. Realism was born in Europe in the nineteenth century and soon became popular in the United States, while Naturalism became prominent at the beginning of the twentieth century. Both traditions have continued in one form or another to the present day, and Realistic and Naturalistic novelists include some of America's most significant authors, such as Sherwood Anderson, Saul Bellow, Ambrose Bierce, Willa Cather, Theodore Dreiser, Ralph Ellison, and Jack London. This reference includes biographical and critical entries for more than 120 American Naturalistic and Realistic novelists.

An introductory essay discusses the history of the Realistic and Naturalistic traditions, points to the difficulty of defining them, and surveys the many authors who have been associated with the two movements. The entries that follow are arranged alphabetically to facilitate use. Each includes basic biographical information and a narrative overview of the writer's educational background, professional career, and published works. The writer's works are briefly discussed in relation to the Realistic and Naturalistic traditions. Entries include primary and secondary bibliographies, and the volume closes with a list of works for further reading.

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