



The Oxford Companion to American Literature

James D. Hart

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For more than half a century, James D. Hart's *The Oxford Companion to American Literature* has been an unparalleled guide to America's literary culture, providing one of the finest resources to this country's rich history of great writers. Now this acclaimed work has been completely revised and updated to reflect current developments in the world of American letters.

For the sixth edition, editors James D. Hart and Phillip Leininger have updated the *Companion* in light of what has happened in American literature since 1982. To this end, they have revised the entries on such established authors as Saul Bellow, Norman Mailer, and Joyce Carol Oates, and they have added more than 180 new entries on novelists (T. Coraghessan Boyle, Tim O'Brien, Louise Erdrich, Don De Lillo), poets (Rita Dove, Weldon Kees), playwrights (Wendy Wasserstein, August Wilson), popular writers (Stephen King, Louis L'Amour), historians (James M. McPherson, David Herbert Donald, William Manchester), naturalists (Aldo Leopold, Edward Abbey), and literary critics (Camille Paglia, Richard Ellmann). In addition, the *Companion* boasts more women's, African-American, and ethnic voices, with new entries on such luminaries as Charlotte Perkins Gilman, M.F.K. Fisher, William Least Heat-Moon, Ursula Le Guin, and Oscar Hijuelos, among many others.

These additions represent only some of the revisions for the new edition. Of course, the basic qualities of the *Companion* that readers have grown to know and love over the years are as superb as ever. With over 5,000 total entries, *The Oxford Companion to American Literature* reflects a dynamic balance between past and contemporary literature, surveying virtually every aspect of our national literature, from the Pulitzer Prize to pulp fiction, and from Walt Whitman to William F. Buckley, Jr. There are over 2,000 biographical profiles of important American authors (with information regarding their styles, subjects, and major works) and influential foreign writers as well as other figures who have been important in the nation's social and cultural history. There are more than 1,100 full summaries of important American novels, stories, essays, poems (with verse form noted), plays, biographies and autobiographies, tracts, narratives, and histories. The new edition provides historical background and astute commentary on literary schools and movements, literary awards, magazines, newspapers, and a wide variety of other matters directly related to writing in America. Finally, the book is thoroughly cross-referenced and features an extensive and fully updated index of literary and social history.

Ranging from Captain John Smith to John Updike, and from Anne Bradstreet to Anne Rice, the sixth edition of *The Oxford Companion to American Literature* is up to date, accurate, and comprehensive, a delight for both the casual browser and the serious student.

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