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**This is a collection of sixty outstanding literary essays that span fifty years?the Modern Era in literature.**

In 1920 Rebecca West chided Compton Mackenzie for writing books that resembled "padded fruits on the modern plutocratic cushion." Two years later, Sherwood Anderson warned us about Gertrude Stein. In 1930, Padraic Colum described the hard but worthwhile work in store for us if we wished to understand "even thirty percent" of Joyce's "Work in Progress" (which became *Finnegan's Wake*). In 1936 James Thurber reacted to proletarian literature. In 1940 Hamilton Basso reflected on the premature death of Thomas Wolfe. In the fifties Irving Howe took aim and James Gould Cozzens, and Leslie Fielder compared Truman Capote and Saul Bellow. In 1961 Stanley Kauffman welcomed home an old shocker? *The Tropic of Cancer*. In 1964 John Updike evaluated Nabokov. Recently Michael Crichton discussed sci-fi and Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

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### Editorial Review

#### About the Author

Gilbert A. Harrison was a former publisher and editor of The New Republic. In addition, he is the author of A Timeless Affair: The Life of Anita McCormick Blaine and The Enthusiast: A Life of Thornton Wilder.

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