

Miller, Henry (1891-1980) Encyclopedia Article

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Contents

Miller, Henry (1891-1980) Encyclopedia Article.....	1
Contents.....	2
Miller, Henry (1891-1980).....	3



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Henry Miller is an American-born bohemian writer whose works, with D. H. Lawrence's, are the first respected books of the twentieth century containing explicit sex. His first and most famous book is *Tropic of Cancer* (1934), an autobiographical novel portraying Miller's promiscuous Paris lifestyle. His subsequent works, including *Tropic of Capricorn* (1939), *The World of Sex* (1940), and the trilogy *Sexus*, *Plexus*, and *Nexus* (1949-1960), are similarly explicit and autobiographical, while also rich with brilliant commentary on the nature and meaning of being a freethinking artist-writer in the modern world. Though personal and nonpolitical, Miller's work is often obscene and as such has often been censored in the United States and the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, Miller has always been widely read, and is the key precursor to the 1950s Beat Poets and to the sexually-frank hippie writers of the 1960s. Miller is also known for his paintings, his 1941 travel narrative on Greece, and his relationship with diarist and critic Anaïs Nin.

Further Reading:

Gordon, William A. *The Mind and Art of Henry Miller*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1967.

Jong, Erica. *The Devil at Large: Erica Jong on Henry Miller*. New York, Turtle Bay, 1993.

Kersnowski, Frank L., and Alice Hughes, editors. *Conversations with Henry Miller*. Jackson, University Press of Mississippi, 1994.

Wickes, George, editor. *Henry Miller and the Critics*. Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1963.