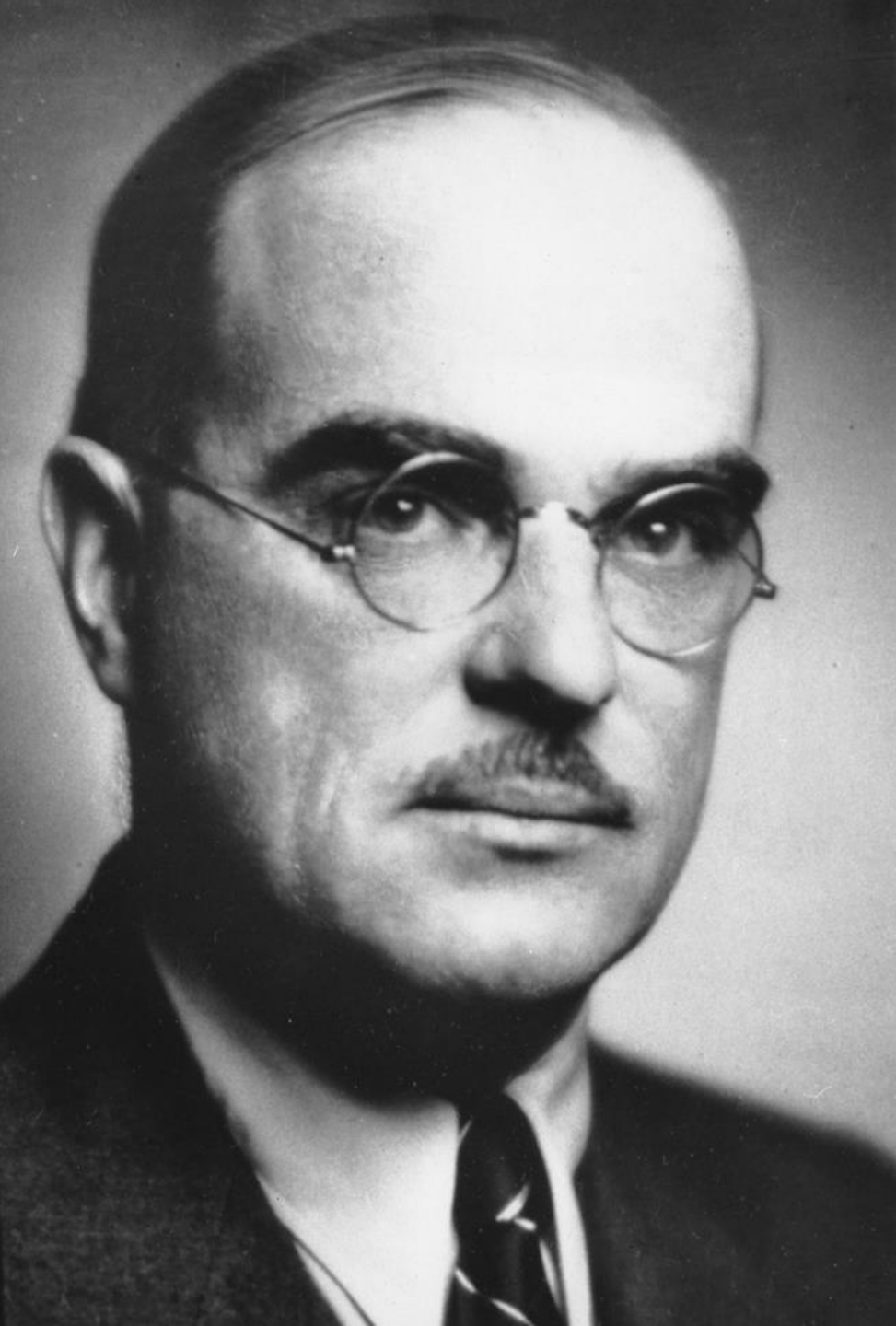




# Literature

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Authors, Titles, Plots



# Thornton Wilder (1897 – 1975)

## American

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- *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*, novel (1927) – The story of several interrelated people who die in the collapse of an Inca rope bridge in Peru. It was the best-selling work of fiction in 1927. Pulitzer Prize winner.
- *Our Town*, play (1938) – Divided into three acts: “Daily Life”; “Love and Marriage”; and “Death”. About a town in New Jersey. Pulitzer Prize winner.
- *The Skin of Our Teeth*, play (1942) – Epic comedy-drama allegory about the life of mankind, centering on the Antrobus family. Pulitzer Prize winner.
- *The Eighth Day*, novel (1967) - Set in a mining town in southern Illinois, the plot revolves around John Barrington Ashley, who is accused of murdering his neighbor Breckenridge Lansing. National Book Award winner.

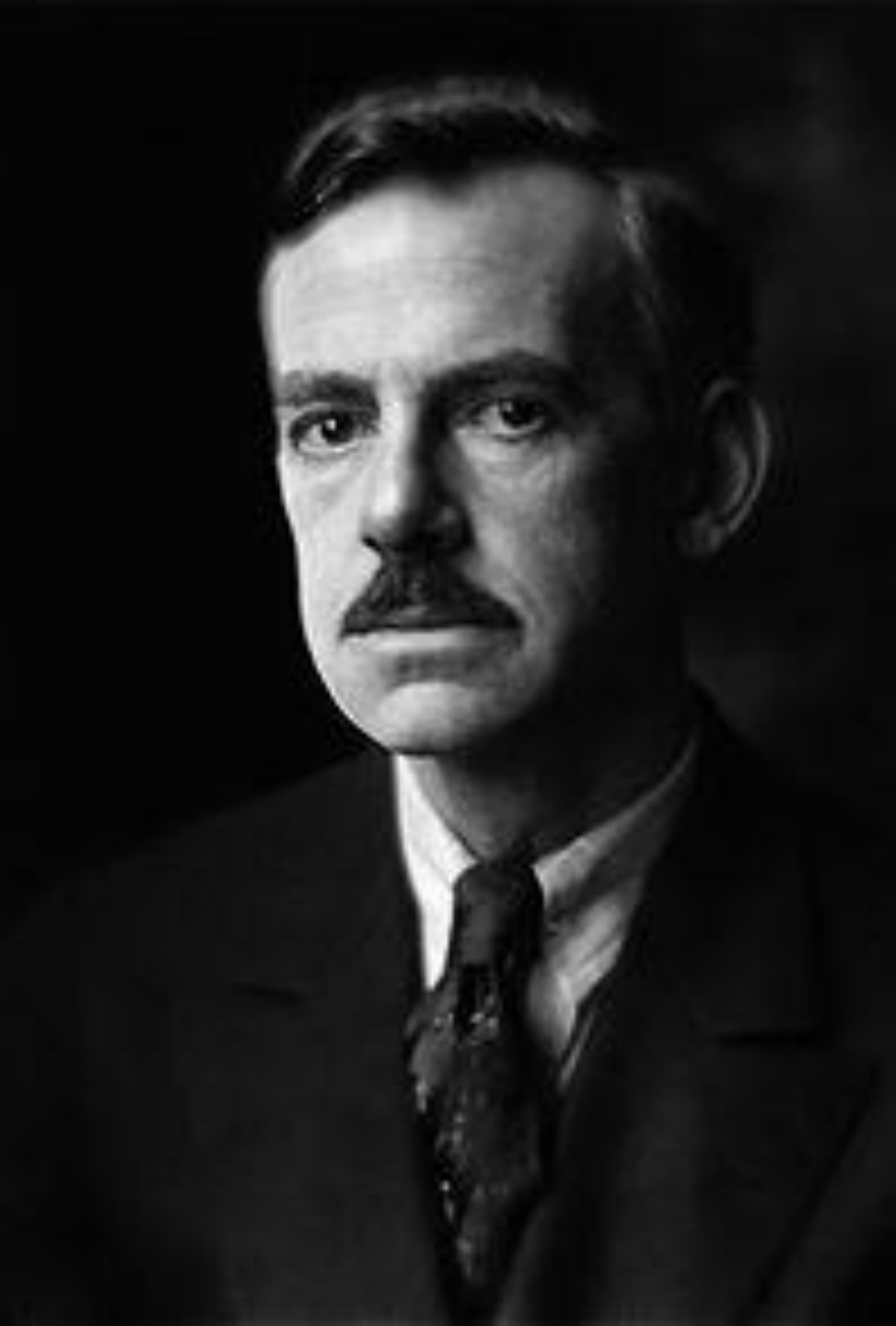


# Eugene O'Neill (1888 – 1953)

## American

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- *Beyond the Horizon*, play (1920) – Focuses on two brothers: Robert who is about to go off to sea with their uncle Dick, and Andrew who looks forward to marrying his sweetheart and starts a family. Pulitzer Prize winner.
- *Anna Cristie*, play (1921) – The story of a former prostitute who falls in love but runs into difficulty in turning her life around. Pulitzer Prize winner.
- *Strange Interlude*, play (1928) – The daughter of a classics professor at a college in New England, who is devastated when her adored fiancé is killed in World War I, Nina embarks on a series of sordid affairs before marrying an amiable fool, Sam Evans. The play's subject matter led to it being censored or banned in many cities. Pulitzer Prize winner.



## Eugene O'Neill cont.

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- *Ah, Wilderness!*, play (1933) – Focusing on the Miller family, in particular the middle son, Richard, and his coming of age. It differs from a typical O'Neill play in its happy ending for the central character, and depiction of a happy family, and is his only well-known comedy.
- *The Iceman Cometh*, play (1946) – Focusing on twelve men and three prostitutes, who are dead-end alcoholics. They drift purposelessly from day to day, coming fully alive only during the semi-annual visits of salesman Theodore “Hickey” Hickman.
- *Long Day's Journey into Night*, play (1956) – A semi-autobiographical work written 1941-42 and published posthumously, widely considered to be his magnum opus. Concerns the Tyrone family. The mother is addicted to morphine and one of the sons is ill with tuberculosis. Pulitzer Prize winner.





# Edward Albee (1928 – 2016)

## American

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- *The Zoo Story*, play (1958) – Concerning two men who meet on a park bench in Central Park, one a wealthy executive and the other a destitute man desiring a genuine human conversation who forces the other man to listen to the story about why he went to the zoo.
- *The Sandbox*, play (1960) – Focusing on a Young Man doing calisthenics in a sandbox where his Granny is left after his Mommy and Daddy bring her out from the city.
- *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, play (1962) – Examining the bitter and frustrated relationship of Martha and George. Tony Award winner.



## Edward Albee cont.

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- *Seascape*, play (1975) – Nancy and Charlie are discussing retirement on the beach when another couple appears, two human-sized lizards named Leslie and Sarah who speak and act like people. Pulitzer Prize winner.
- *Three Tall Women*, play (1994) – An old woman reflects on her life recalling her childhood and early marriage with joy and her husband's death and affairs and the estranged relationship of her gay son with shame. Pulitzer Prize winner.
- *The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?*, play (2002) – The tale of a married, middle-aged architect who falls in love with a goat, the play focuses on the limits of an ostensibly liberal society. Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize winner.



# Tennessee Williams (1911 – 1983)

## American

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- *The Glass Menagerie*, play (1944) – Introduced to the audience by Tom based on his recollection of his mother and sister Laura. Based on memory, Tom cautions the audience that this may not be what happened. The play has strong autobiographical elements, featuring characters based on its author and his family.
- *A Streetcar Named Desire*, play (1947) – Williams' most famous play. Beginning after the loss of her family home, Blanche DuBois travels from Mississippi to New Orleans to live with her married sister. Blanche is in her thirties and, with no money, has nowhere else to go.
- *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, play (1955) – The story of a Southern family in crisis, especially the husband Brick and wife Margaret (usually called Maggie or “Maggie the Cat”), and their interaction with Brick's family over the course of one evening's gathering at the family estate in Mississippi. Pulitzer Prize winner.



## Tennessee Williams cont.

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- *Sweet Bird of Youth*, play (1959) – Telling the story of a gigolo and drifter, Chance Wayne, who returns to his hometown as the companion of a faded movie star, Alexandra Del Lago (travelling incognito as Princess Kosmonopolis), whom he hopes to use to help him break into the movies.
- *The Night of the Iguana*, play (1959) - In 1940s Mexico, an ex-minister, the Reverend T. Lawrence Shannon, has been locked out of his church after characterizing the Western image of God as a “senile delinquent” during one of his sermons. Shannon is not defrocked, but he is institutionalized for a “nervous breakdown”. Some time after his release, the Rev. Shannon obtains employment as a tour guide for a second-rate travel agency.



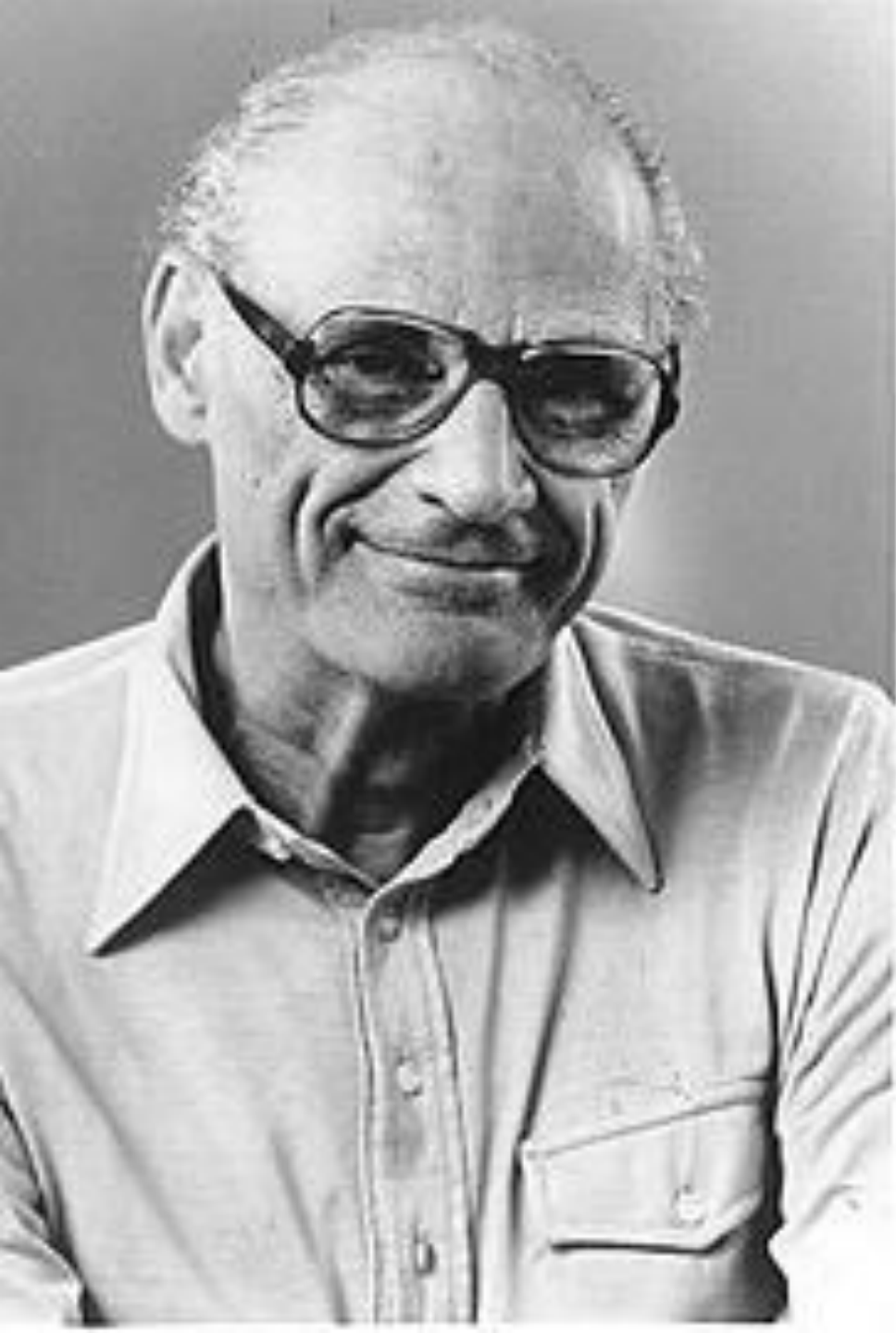


# Lorraine Hansberry (1930 – 1965)

## American

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- *A Raisin in the Sun*, play (1959) – The story tells of a black family's experiences in south Chicago, as they attempt to improve their financial circumstances with an insurance payout following the death of the father.
- *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*, play (1965) – A story about a man named Sidney, his pitfalls within his personal life, and struggles in Bohemian culture.



# Arthur Miller (1915 – 2005)

## American

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- *All My Sons*, play (1947) – Beginning in August 1947, Joe Keller and his wife Kate are visited by a neighbor, Frank who is trying to figure out the horoscope of the Kellers' missing son Larry, who disappeared in the World War II. Tony Award winner.
- *Death of a Salesman*, play (1949) – Miller's best-known play. Focusing on traveling salesman Willy Loman's struggles to find success in his job and financial security for his family. Often considered the finest American play of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century alongside Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize winner.
- *The Crucible*, play (1953) – A dramatization and partially fictional telling of the Salem Witch Trials that was an allegory for McCarthyism. Considered Miller's second-best work. Tony Award winner.



# Lillian Hellman (1905 – 1984)

## American

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- *The Children's Hour*, play (1934) – Set in an all-girls boarding school run by two women, Karen Wright and Martha Dobie. An angry student, Mary Tilford, runs away from the school and to avoid being sent back she tells her grandmother that the two headmistresses are having a lesbian affair.
- *The Little Foxes*, play (1939) – Set in a small town in Alabama in 1900, it focuses on the struggle for control of a family business. Considered Hellman's finest work and a classic of 20<sup>th</sup> Century American theatre.
- *Watch the Rhine*, play (1941) – Focusing on the Muellers, a family with a German father and an American mother who are seeking to move to America during the rise of the Third Reich as the father, Kurt, was involved in anti-fascist demonstrations in Germany and Spain.



## Lillian Hellman cont.

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- *Another Part of the Forest*, play (1946) – A prequel to *The Little Foxes* set in the fictional town of Bowden, Alabama in June 1880, the plot focuses on the wealthy, ruthless, and innately evil Hubbard family and their rise to prominence.
- *The Autumn Garden*, play (1951) – Set in September 1949 in a summer home in a resort on the Gulf of Mexico the play is a study of the defeats, disappointments and diminished expectations of people reaching middle age.
- *Toys in the Attic*, play (1960) - Set in New Orleans following the Great Depression, the play focuses on the Berniers sisters, two middle-aged spinsters who have sacrificed their own ambitions to look after their ne'er-do-well younger brother Julian, whose grandiose dreams repeatedly lead to financial disasters.





# Alexander Pushkin (1799 – 1837)

## Russian

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- “The Blizzard”, short story (1831) – Published as a part of the volume *Tales of the Late Ivan Petrovich Belkin*, the plot concerns the relationships of an aristocratic young woman named Maria Gavrilovna and the unusual coincidences that accompany them.
- “The Queen of Spades, short story (1834) – Hermann, an ethnic German, is an officer of the engineers in the Imperial Russian Army. He constantly watches the other officers gamble, but never plays himself. One night, Tomsy tells a story about his grandmother, an elderly countess. Many years ago, in France, she lost a fortune at faro, and then won it back with the secret of the three winning cards, which she learned from the notorious Count of St. Germain. Hermann becomes obsessed with obtaining the secret.

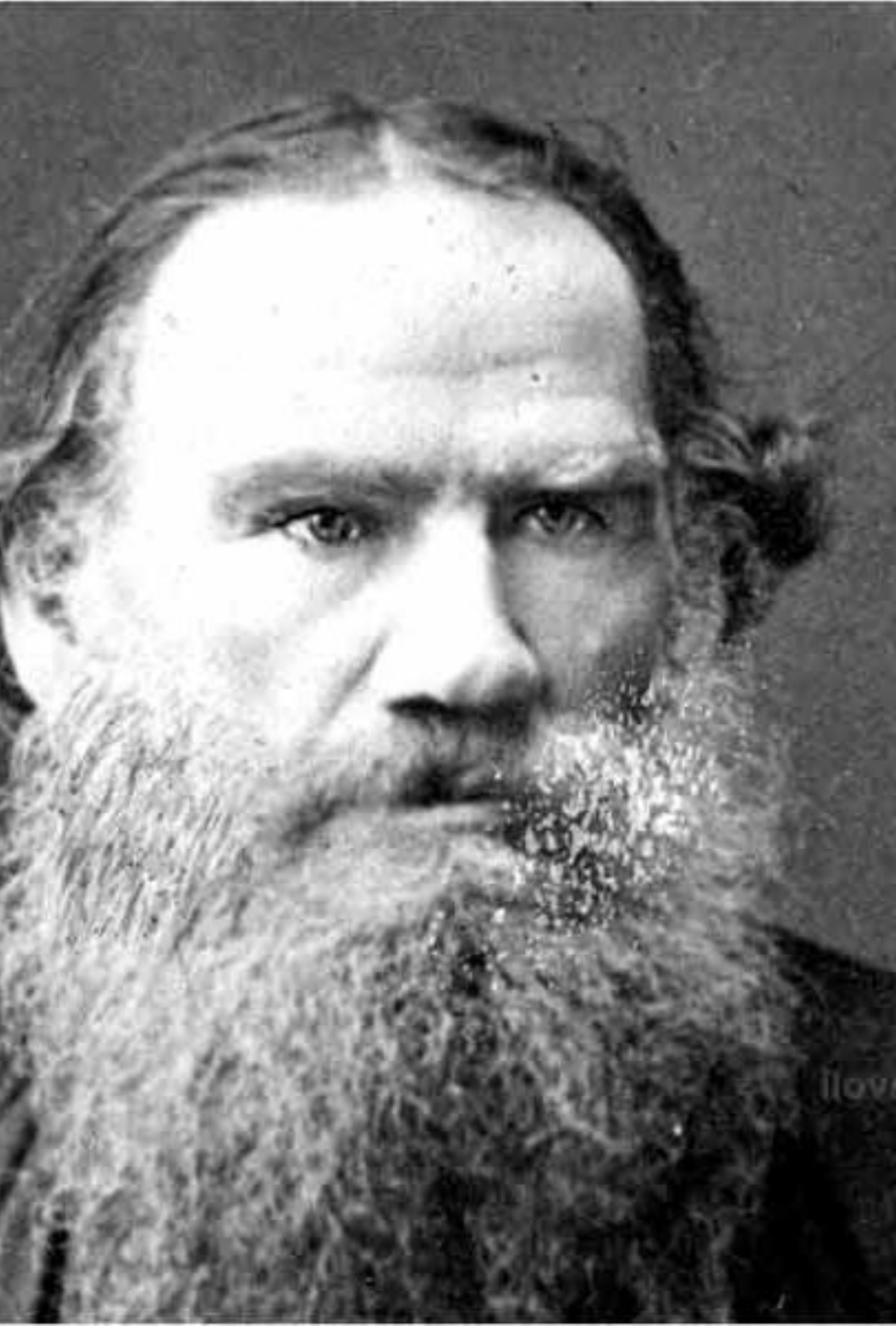


# Nikolai Gogol (1809 – 1852)

## Russian

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- “Nevsky Prospekt”, short story (1835) – Describing a major thoroughfare in St. Petersburg, the story focuses on two men, who each pursue two separate women. One working in a brothel and the other being the wife of a German tinsmith.
- “The Nose”, short story (1836) – The events of this story begin when a barber cuts open a loaf of bread to find a nose in it while the owner of the nose wakes up to find a clean patch of skin where his nose was and follows the man as he tries to regain his nose.
- “The Overcoat”, short story (1842) – This story follows a poor government clerk whose only joy in life is copying documents. Because others make fun of his worn overcoat, he seeks to have it repaired and then buys a new one just to have it stolen away. After dying of a fever, his ghost haunts St. Petersburg in search of the stolen overcoat.



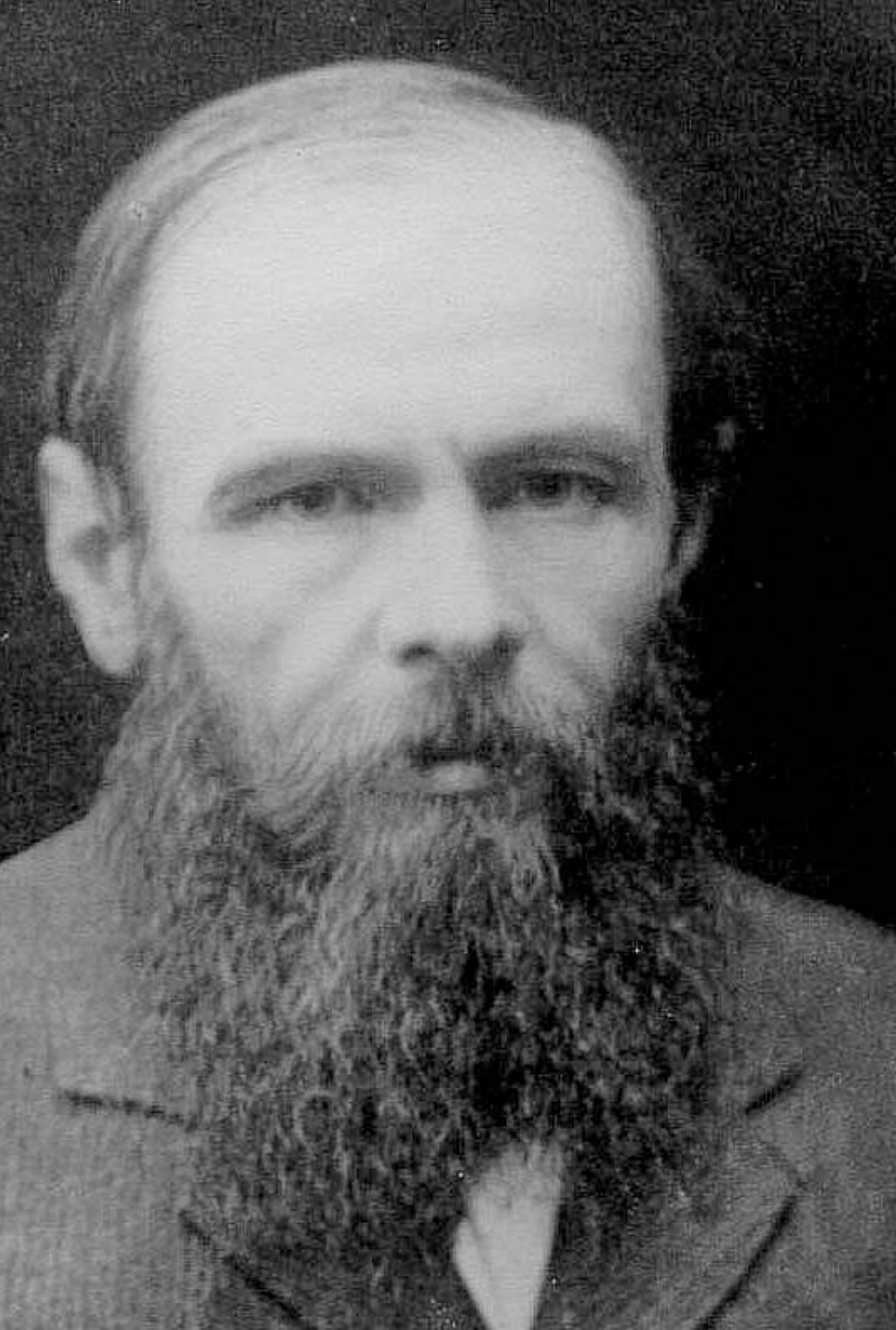
# Leo Tolstoy (1828 – 1910)

## Russian

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- *War and Peace*, novel (1869) – An epic novel chronicling the French invasion of Russia and the impact of the Napoleonic era on Russia and five aristocratic families in particular. Containing elements of narrative and philosophical discussion, it is considered Tolstoy's finest work and a classic of Russian and world literature.
- *Anna Karenina*, novel (1878) - Dealing with themes of betrayal, faith, family, marriage, Imperial Russian society, desire, and rural vs. city life. The plot centers on an extramarital affair between Anna and dashing cavalry officer Count Alexei Kirillovich Vronsky that scandalizes the social circles of St. Petersburg and forces the young lovers to flee for Italy in a search for happiness. Returning to Russia, their lives further unravel.





# Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821 – 1888)

## Russian

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- *Crime and Punishment*, novel (1866) – Focusing on Rodion Raskolnikov, who formulates a plan to kill a pawnbroker for her money believing that with the money he could liberate himself from poverty and go on to perform great deeds. However, he finds himself racked with disgust for what he has done.
- *The Idiot*, novel (1868) – This follows the life of Prince Myshkin, a young man whose goodness, open-hearted simplicity, and guilelessness lead many to mistakenly assume that he lacks intelligence.
- *The Brothers Karmarazov*, novel (1879) – Dostoyevsky's last novel that centers around the moral and ethical implications of the modernization of Russia with a plot that revolves around patricide.





# Anton Chekov (1860 – 1904)

## Russian

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- “The Death of a Government Clerk”, short story (1883) – A petty government official sneezes on a high-ranking government official in front of him. He begs forgiveness but only induces rage. Shocked at this, the petty official goes home to die.
- *The Seagull*, play (1896) – Dramatises the romantic and artistic conflicts between four characters: story writer Boris Trigorin, the ingenue Nina, fading actress Irina Arkadina, and her son the playwright Konstantin Tréplev.
- *Uncle Vanya*, play (1899) – Portrays the visit of an elderly professor and his younger second wife, Yelena, to the rural estate that supports their urban lifestyle.
- *Three Sisters*, play (1901) – Focuses on the Prozorov sisters: Olga, Maria, and Irina.
- *The Cherry Orchard*, play (1904) – A landowner returns to her estate just before it is auctioned. Unable to save the estate, she allows the sale and leaves to the sound of the cherry orchard being cut down.



# Mikhail Bulgakov (1891 – 1940)

## Russian

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- *The Fatal Eggs*, novella (1925) – Focuses on an aging zoologist specializing in amphibians returning to his studies after the destructive efforts of the Russian Civil War.
- *Heart of a Dog*, novella (1925) – A Soviet satire that stands as an allegory for the Communist Revolution in Russia, the plot follows a stray dog who is close to death before being offered a sausage by a successful surgeon.
- *The Master and Margarita*, novel (1967) – Considered Bulgakov's magnum opus and the foremost piece of Soviet satire, the plot revolves around Behemoth, a demon in the form of an unusually large anthropomorphic cat.



# Homer (c.1000 BCE)

## Greek

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- *The Iliad*, epic poem (c.1000 BCE) – Set during the ten-year siege of Troy tells of the battles between King Agememnon and the hero Achilles.
- *The Odyssey*, epic poem (c.1000 BCE) – Set after the end of the Trojan War, this follows the 10-year homecoming journey of King Odysseus to Ithaca. Both of Homer's works provide a foundation for Western literature, being the oldest extant works.





Virgil (70 – 19 BCE)

Roman

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- *The Aeneid*, epic poem (c. 25 BCE) – Written in the Homeric style, this tells the story of the Trojan Aeneas who travels to Italy following the war and becomes an ancestor to the Romans.





# Dante Alighieri (1265 – 1321)

## Italian

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- *The Divine Comedy*, epic poem (1320) – A foundational work to the Italian language and one of the greatest literary works in the world, this tells the story of Dante's travels through Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven and is separated into three books titled *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradisio*. Through Hell he is guided by Virgil and through Purgatory and Heaven by his love Beatrice. In addition to being foundational to the Italian language, it has shaped the popular Christian perception of the afterlife.



# Jane Austen (1775 – 1817)

## English

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- *Sense and Sensibility*, novel (1811) – Tells the story of the Dashwood sisters as they move with their widowed mother from the estate they grew up in and follows them as they come of age.
- *Pride and Prejudice*, novel (1813) – The story of Elizabeth Bennet, one of five daughters of a rich estate owner in England, who must marry well because upon her father's death the family will lose all support as the estate can only be inherited by a male heir.
- *Northanger Abbey*, novel (1818) – A coming of age tale of Catherine Morland that is also a satire of the then-popular Gothic novel.



# Alexandre Dumas (1802 – 1870)

## French

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- *The Count of Monte Cristo*, novel (1844) –Edmond Dantès is incorrectly accused of treason and imprisoned without trial. A fellow prisoner realizes his jealous rival turned him in and convinces him to escape. He becomes the Count of Monte Cristo and returns to Paris to seek revenge on those who conspired against him.
- *The Three Musketeers*, novel (1844) – Set in the 1620's, the story of d'Artagnan who seeks to join the elite Musketeers of the Guard. He is unable to join immediately, but is met and befriended by Athos, Porthos, and Aramis who are the three most formidable members of the corps.



# Edgar Allan Poe (1809 – 1849)

## American

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- “The Pit and the Pendulum”, short story (1842) – The story of the torments of a prisoner during the Spanish Inquisition.
- “The Tell-Tale Heart”, short story (1843) – Told by a narrator who asserts his sanity despite the calculating murder that he committed. Over the story his disturbance and shame results in him hearing a thumping that he believes is the dead man’s heart.
- “The Raven”, poem (1845) – Poe’s most famous poem, telling the story of a mourning narrator who is visited by a raven at midnight that repeatedly says “Nevermore”.
- “Annabel Lee”, poem (1849) – A narrative poem told by young man who loved his bride such that the angels grew jealous of their happiness and killed her with a chill wind, and now she rests in a sepulchre by the sea.



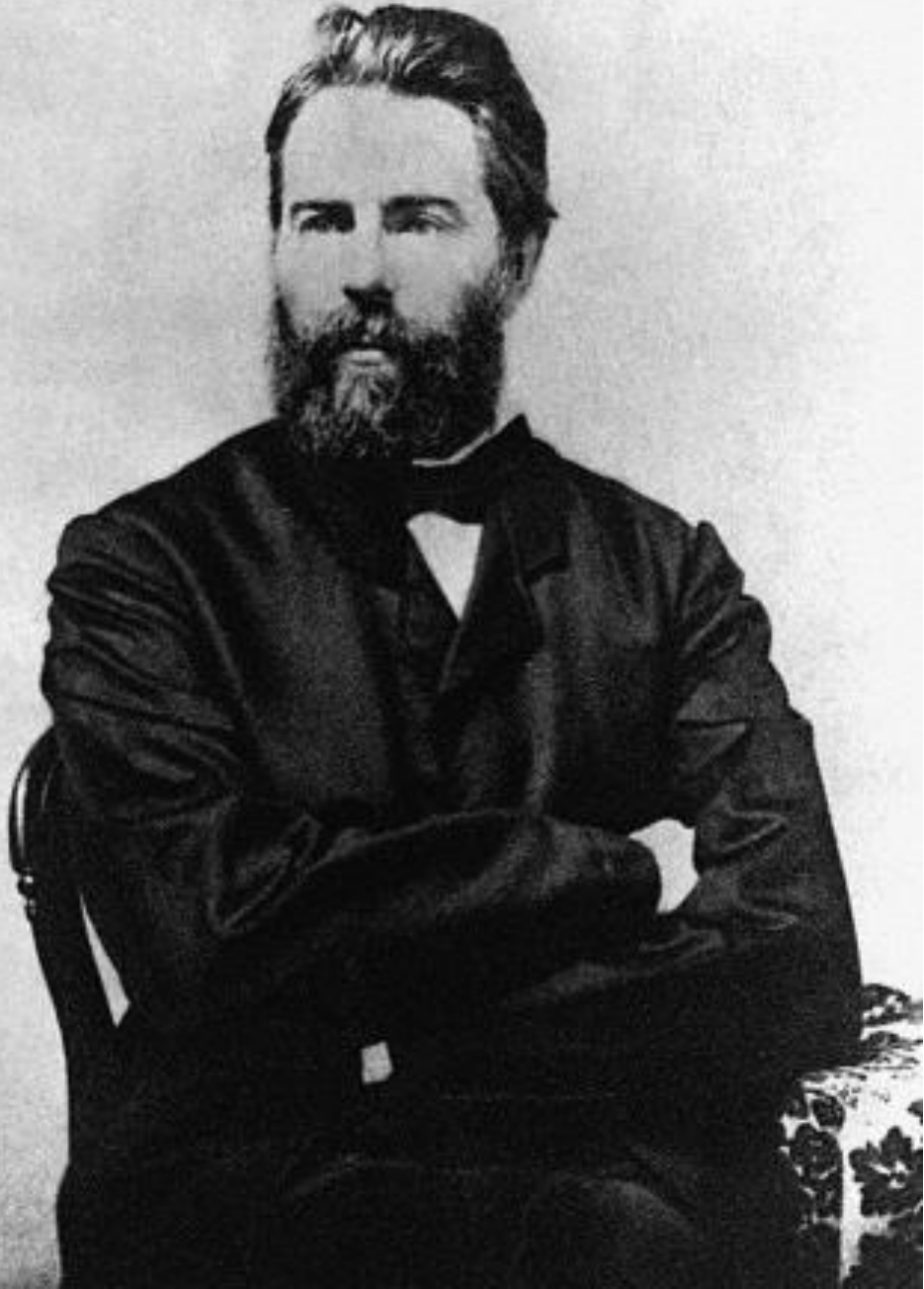


# Charles Dickens (1812 – 1870)

## English

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- *Oliver Twist*, novel (1839) – The tale of an orphan who is recruited into a life of crime and labor, inspired by conditions for children in Victorian England, likely including Dickens' own childhood.
- *A Christmas Carol*, novella (1843) – The story of the redemption of the penny-pinching Ebenezer Scrooge as he is visited by the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Yet-to-Come.
- *David Copperfield*, novel (1850) – An autobiographical novel that was the personal favorite of Dickens himself and is often considered his finest work. The major themes deal with growth and maturity.
- *A Tale of Two Cities*, novel (1859) – A historical novel set in London and Paris before and during the French Revolution.
- *Great Expectations*, novel (1861) – The story of the education and coming-of-age of the orphan Pip.

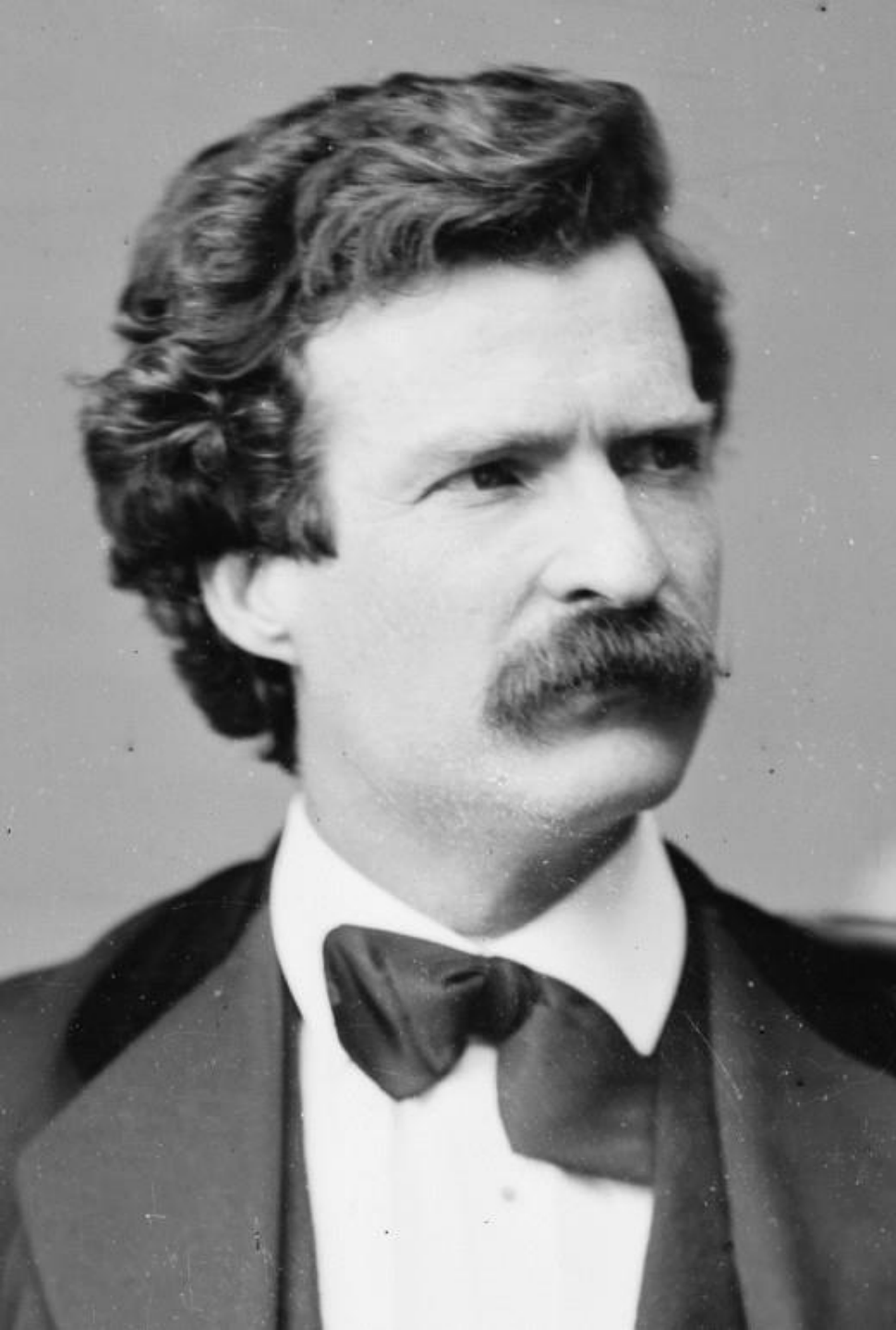


# Herman Melville (1819 – 1891)

## American

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- *Moby Dick*, novel (1851) – Told by Ishmael, this is the story of Captain Ahab's obsessive hunt for the sperm whale Moby Dick who bit off Ahab's leg at the knee in his previous whaling voyage.



# Mark Twain (1835 – 1910)

## American

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- *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, novel (1876) – The story of a mischievous young boy in Missouri who lived along the Mississippi River in the 1840's.
- *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, novel (1884) – A sequel to *Tom Sawyer*, this story is known for its titular protagonist and his journeys with an escaped slave, Jim, along the Mississippi. This novel has had continuing controversy over racial stereotypes and slurs despite the anti-racism themes present.
- *The Prince and the Pauper*, novel (1881) – The story of two boys born on the same day who are physically identical, one being Prince Edward and the other Tom Canty, a pauper. The two become friends and eventually switch places, intrigued by the similarities of their appearances but the differences of their circumstances.
- *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, novel (1889) – A satire on feudalism and American democratic values, a Civil War Union soldier suffers a massive blow to the head and wakes up in Arthurian England.





# Oscar Wilde (1854 – 1900)

## Irish

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- *The Picture of Dorian Grey*, novel (1890) – The story of a man who becomes obsessive with a particularly nice portrait painted of him who becomes so obsessed with the beauty of the image that he retains that appearance himself while the picture begins to age.
- *The Importance of Being Earnest*, play (1895) – A comedy in which the protagonists maintain fictional personae to escape burdensome social obligations.





# Jack London (1876 – 1916)

## American

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- *The Call of the Wild*, novel (1903) – Set in the Yukon during the Klondike Gold Rush, this tells the story of the dog Buck who is stolen from his owner, sold as a sled dog, and becomes increasingly feral.
- *White Fang*, novel (1906) – A thematic sequel to *The Call of the Wild* also set in the Klondike Gold Rush, this follows the eponymous wild-born wolfdog in his journey to domestication.



# Virginia Woolf (1882 – 1941)

## English

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- *Mrs. Dalloway*, novel (1925) – Details a day in the life of Clarissa Dalloway, a high-society woman in post-WWI England.
- *To the Lighthouse*, novel (1927) – Follows the Ramsay family and their visits to the Isle of Skye in Scotland in the 1910's.



# J. R. R. Tolkien (1892 – 1973)

## English

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- *The Hobbit*, novel (1937) – The story of Bilbo Baggins, a Hobbit of the Shire, as he is taken by the wizard Gandalf and a company of thirteen dwarves led by King Thorin Oakenshield in their quest to regain the Lonely Mountain from the dragon Smaug.
- *The Lord of the Rings*, novel (1954-55) –Published into three parts: *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers*, and *The Return of the King*. A sequel to *The Hobbit*, focusing on Bilbo's nephew and heir Frodo and the quest he undertakes with eight companions to destroy the One Ring, forged long ago by the Dark Lord Sauron.
- *The Silmarillion*, collection (1977) – Edited and published by his son Christopher Tolkien, *The Silmarillion* is a collection of the lore, history, theology, and metaphysical ordering of Tolkien's world. The primary text, *Quenta Silmarillion*, deals with the history of the three Silmarils, jewels of light forged by the Elf Fëanor that were stolen by the First Dark Lord, Morgoth.





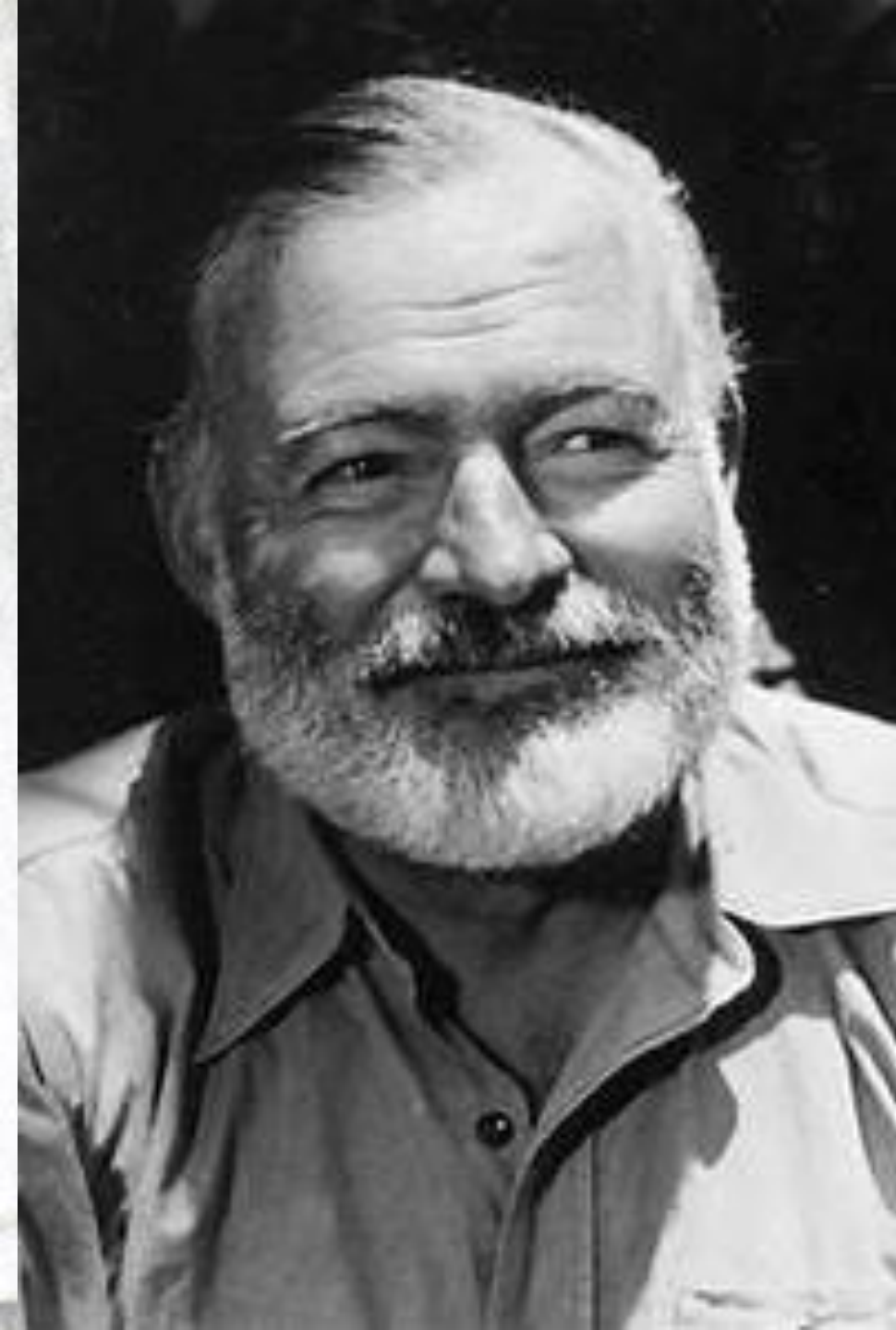
# F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896 – 1940)

## American

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- *This Side of Paradise*, novel (1920) – Examines the lives and morality of post-World War I youth. Its protagonist Amory Blaine is an attractive student at Princeton University who dabbles in literature.
- *The Beautiful and the Damned*, novel (1922) – Explores and portrays New York café society and the American Eastern elite during the Jazz Age before and after the Great War and in the early 1920s.
- *The Great Gatsby*, novel (1925) – Primarily concerning the young and mysterious millionaire Jay Gatsby and his obsession with the beautiful Daisy Buchanan. Considered to be Fitzgerald's magnum opus, *The Great Gatsby* explores themes of decadence, idealism, resistance to change, social upheaval and excess, creating a portrait of the Roaring Twenties that has been described as a cautionary tale regarding the American Dream.





# Ernest Hemingway (1899 – 1961)

## American

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- *The Sun Also Rises*, novel (1926) – Portrays American and British expatriates who travel from Paris to the Festival of San Fermín in Pamplona to watch the running of the bulls and the bullfights.
- *A Farewell to Arms*, novel (1929) – A first-person account of Frederic Henry, serving as a lieutenant in the ambulance corps of the Italian Army in WWI. Depicts Hemingway's life as an ambulance driver in the war.
- *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, novel (1940) – Tells the story of Robert Jordan, a young American volunteer attached to a Republican guerrilla unit during the Spanish Civil War. As a dynamiter, he is assigned to blow up a bridge during an attack on the city of Segovia.
- *The Old Man and the Sea*, novella (1952) – Tells the story of Santiago, an aging Cuban fisherman who struggles with a giant marlin far out in the Gulf Stream off the coast of Cuba. Pulitzer Prize winner, contributed to Hemingway's 1954 Nobel Prize in Literature.



## John Steinbeck

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- *Of Mice and Men*, novella (1937) – Tells the story of George Milton and Lennie Small, two migrant workers in California in search of new job opportunities during the Great Depression in the United States.
- *The Grapes of Wrath*, novel (1939) – During the Great Depression, the Joads, poor tenant farmers from Oklahoma are removed by drought, economic hardship, agricultural industry changes, and bank foreclosures. Pulitzer Prize winner, contributed to Steinbeck's 1962 Nobel Prize.
- *The Pearl*, novella (1947) – Follows a poor pearl diver, Kino and his family in Mexico. Their lives are transformed for better and for worse by the discovery of a particularly perfect pearl that brings wealth, salvation, and envy.
- *East of Eden*, novel (1952) - Tells of two families, the Trasks and the Hamiltons, and their interwoven stories. Steinbeck considered this to be his personal magnum opus.