

TRUMAN CAPOTE

b. September 30, 1924

d. August 25, 1984

AUTHOR

“Failure is a condiment that gives success its flavor.”

He was openly gay during a period when the subject was taboo.

Truman Capote is a critically acclaimed author of contemporary American literature. He is best known for the novels “In Cold Blood” and “Breakfast at Tiffany’s.”

Born Truman Persons in New Orleans, Capote’s parents divorced shortly after his birth. Neglected by his mother, he was sent to Alabama to live with his aunt. While in Alabama, Capote began a lifelong friendship with Harper Lee, author of “To Kill a Mockingbird.” In 1934, Capote’s mother married a successful businessman. She reclaimed her son and the family moved to Manhattan. Truman adopted his step-father Joe Capote’s last name.

At 17, Capote dropped out of high school and worked as a copyboy for The New Yorker. He began writing well-received articles and short stories. In 1948, Capote published his first novel, “Other Voices, Other Rooms.” The novel’s exploration of homosexual themes, coupled with its provocative cover photo of Capote, garnered him fame and controversy.

In 1958, Capote published “Breakfast at Tiffany’s,” which was adapted into an iconic film starring Audrey Hepburn. In 1965, Capote secured his place among the American literary elite with “In Cold Blood.” He based the novel on the high-profile murder of a Kansas farming family. With “In Cold Blood,” Capote created a new literary genre, the nonfiction novel, which combines fact and fiction. Among Capote’s other popular works are “Local Color” (1950), “The Grass Harp” (1951), “The Muses are Heard” (1956), “The Dogs Bark” (1973) and “Music for Chameleons” (1980). He also wrote numerous plays and screenplays, most notably “The Innocents” (1961).

Capote was also famous for his extravagant lifestyle and flamboyant personality. He appeared frequently on television talk shows and was a prominent member of the social elite, often in the company of the Chaplins, the Kennedys and Marilyn Monroe. Capote was openly gay during a period when the subject was taboo. In 1966, he hosted the Black and White Ball, which is regarded as one of the most important social events of the decade. For 35 years, Capote was in a relationship with fellow author Jack Dunphy.



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