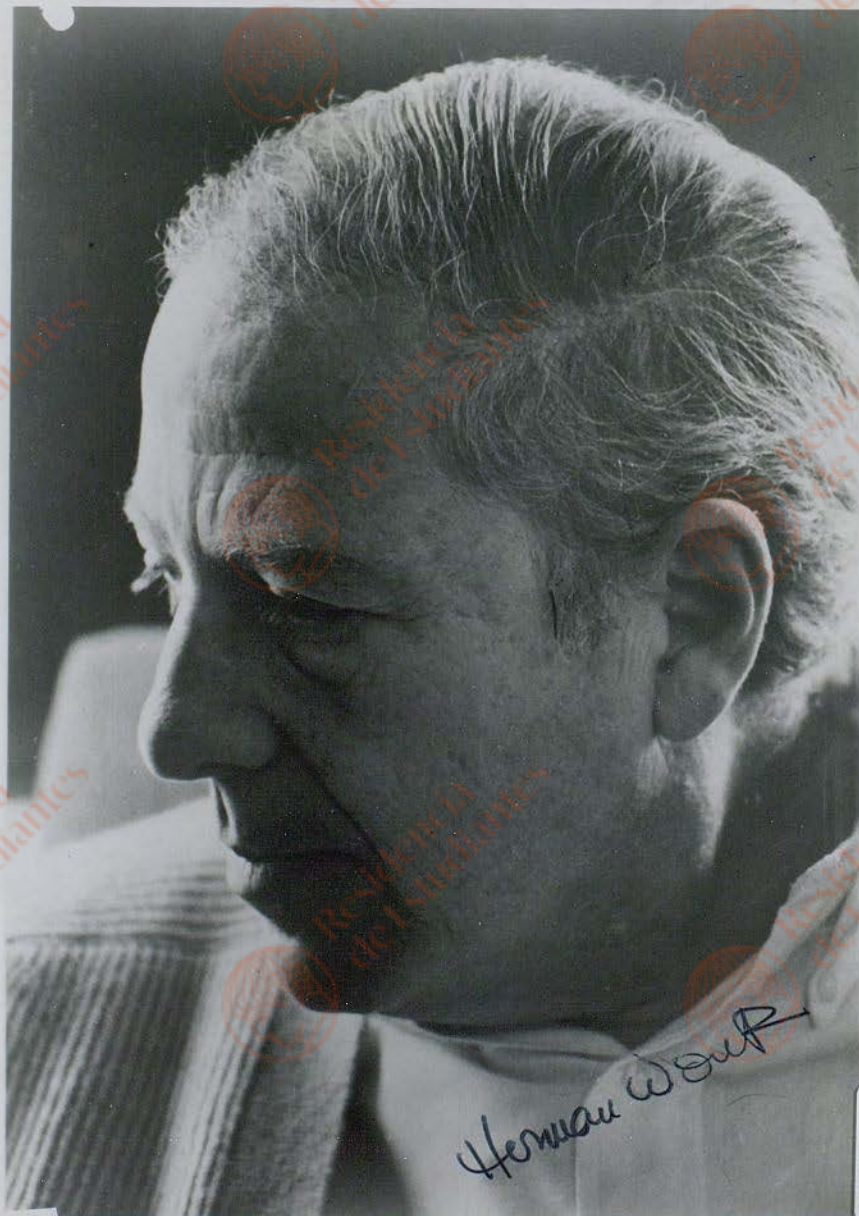


Vernett Smith

OCT 1995
1422



Herman Wouk

1095-3474

TVS

Fotofly/Herman
Wouk

HERMAN WOUK

Signed 7x5

£20-30

K/21

541
1095-3424
1275-5601



Choose another
writer in this
calendar:

by name:
A B C D E F G H
I J K L M N O P
Q R S T U V W X
Y Z

by birthday from
the [calendar](#).

[Credits and
feedback](#)

Herman Wouk (1915-)

American bestseller writer who has dealt in his work moral dilemmas and the Jewish experience. Wouk's epic war novels have been tremendously popular. Several of them have been filmed, including *The Caine Mutiny* (1951). Wouk's two-volume historical novel set in the World War II, *The Winds of War* (1971) and *War and Remembrance* (1978), also gained success as a television mini-series. The large novel could be called an American *War and Peace*, which set individual values, actions, and fates against a panoramic, all-embracing picture of the world.

"Rhoda asked questions about the Jews, as Pug Henry mixed more martinis. Tolver assured her that the newspaper stories were exaggerated. The worst thing had been the so-called Chrystal Night when Nazi toughs had smashed department store windows and set fire to some synagogues. Even that the Jews had brought on themselves, by murdering a German embassy official in Paris. As an embassy official himself, Tolver said, he took rather a dim view of that!" (from *The Winds of War*)

Herman Wouk was born in New York into a family of Jewish immigrants from Russia. He entered the Columbia University, New York where he edited the college humor magazine. After completing an A.B. degree at Columbia University, he became a radio scriptwriter, working with Fred Allen from 1936. In 1941 he briefly served the U.S. government, producing radio broadcasts to sell war bonds. He then joined the United States Navy and served in the Pacific. This period he credited later as a major part of his education. "I learned about machinery, I learned how men behaved under pressure, and I learned about Americans." Wouk began his first novel during off-duty hours at sea. His first ship was the destroyer-minesweeper *Zane*. The last post was second command of the U.S.S. Southard, a ship of the same type. In 1945 he married Betty Sarah Brown; they had three sons.

Since 1946 Wouk worked as a full-time writer. He was a visiting professor at Yeshiva University, New York, in 1958-58, and scholar-in-residence at Aspen Institute, Colorado, in 1973-74. From 1961 to 1969 he was a Trustee of the College of the Virgin Islands, and in 1969-71 he was a member of the Board of Directors of Washington National Symphony. In 1974-75 he was a member of the Board of Directors of Kennedy Center Productions.

Wouk made his debut as a novelist with *Aurora Dawn* (1947), a satire about the New York advertising business, which was inspired by a wave of post-WWII experimentation. It was followed by *City Boy* (1948), a partly autobiographical story of a Bronx boy.

The Caine Mutiny was awarded the 1952 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. The book was made into a hit Broadway play, starring Henry Fonda, and a film, starring Humphrey Bogart. It concerns the events leading up to

and following from a mutiny onboard a minesweeper captained by an incompetent and cowardly tyrant. The main character is Willie Keith, a rich New Yorker, who comes of age as he witnesses the events which take place aboard USS Caine. But the work is best known for its portrayal of the neurotic Captain Queeg, who suffers from acute paranoia, incompetence, and cowardice. "There are four ways of doing things on board my ship. The right way, the wrong way, the navy way, and my way. If they do things my way, we'll get along." Queeg becomes obsessed with petty infractions and even conducts a full-scale investigation to determine who pilfered a quart of strawberries.

Lieutenant Tom Keefer, the villain of the novel, persuades loyal Lieutenant Steve Maryk to take over command of the ship, which happens during a typhoon. In the court-martial Keefer testifies that he always thought Queeg was in full control of his faculties. Maryk's legal defender, Lieutenant Greenwald, does not support the mutiny, yet he still believes Maryk acted according to his best judgment. The unstable Queeg eventually breaks down completely while undergoing interrogation. "Ah, but the strawberries! That's where I had them. They laughed and made jokes, but I provided beyond the shadow of a doubt, and with geometric logic, that a duplicate key to the wardroom icebox did exist. And I'd have produced that key if they hadn't pulled the Caine out of action. I know now they were out to protect some fellow officer." Although the jury acquits Maryk, the verdict is deliberately ambiguous. The deposed Captain Queeg, who had been a hero, but too much combat has had an effect on his mind, is suddenly seen in the novel's resolution as a tragic figure.

Humphrey Bogart had wanted to play Captain Queeg since he read Wouk's original novel. The untypical role for him is one of his greatest, with the scenes of him giving evidence, ball-bearings in hand, being one of the most memorable moments in the movies. However, Edward Dmytryk's direction is stagy - one never feels that the men are actually on a ship in mid-ocean.

Marjorie Morningstar (1955) was considered reactionary by some critics. The story depicted a New York Jewish girl who has great ambitions for herself but ends up a suburban housewife. Marjorie rebels against the confining middle-class values of her family but her dream of being an actress ends in failure. She ultimately gives up her illusions and marries a conventional man, accepting social conformity. In *Youngblood Hawke* (1962) Wouk depicted the obsession of a writer who is caught up in the intrigue of the publishing world. The work was based on the life of the American writer Thomas Wolfe. *This Is My God* (1959) introduced the reader to Jewish orthodoxy.

"Life was a colorful painful paganat to her, in which right and wrong were wobbly yardsticks. Values and morals varied with time and place. Sweeping righteous views, like Victor Henry's Christian morality and Rule's militant socialism, tended to cause much hell and to cramp what little happiness there was to be had. So she thought." (from *War and Remembrance*)

The Winds of War (1971) was a large canvas of the relationship between the actions of individuals and the events leading up to the Japanese

attack on Pearl Harbor. The story focused on the various members of the Henry family, famous for its naval heroes, who finds itself in the center of the conflict. The patriarch of the family is Captain Victor "Pug" Henry, military man, scholar, translator, and advisor to Franklin Roosevelt and other statesmen. He was portrayed in the ABC miniseries by Robert Mitchum - Ali McGraw played the role of Natalie Jastrow, Henry's daughter-in-law. Wouk wrote the screenplay for the production. *War and Remembrance* (1978) concluded the story and attempted to explain the causes and implications of the war.

"Discount my partiality, but my report is that so far 'The Winds of War' is looking good. The films of 'The Caine Mutiny' and 'Marjorie Morningstar' always seemed to me mere thin skims of the story lines, and I never did see a meager Hollywood caper called 'Youngblood Hawk,' vaguely based on my 800-page novel. So it was that I opted for television, with its much broader time limits, for 'The Winds of War.' Sixteen hours!" (Herman Wouk in *The New York Times*, June 14, 1981)

Inside, Outside (1985) is story about a Jewish presidential advisor, Israel David Goodkind, a tax lawyer. It moves in time from the early 1900s to the 1970s and looks at the importance of religious roots to American Jews. President Nixon, a side character, is portrayed in an ironic light, when he shows some interest in Talmud. "The President has a quick and able mind, though not everybody gives him that, not by a long shot. His face lit up. He shot me a sharp glance and said in his most nearly natural voice, 'And you really understand this stuff?' 'Well, I scratch the surface, Mr. President. I come from a rabbinic family.'" Goodkind also writes Nixon's Watergate speech. *The Hope* (1993), a plunge into Israeli life in its early years, began another epic story. It portrayed the first two turbulent decades the followed Israel's birth. The 1948 war of independence, the 1956 Suez war, and the 1967 Six Day War are seen through the lives of three families, mixing fictional characters with real-life figures. The protagonist is Zev Barak, a soldier who can quote Shakespeare, military career reflects the wars. In the sequel, *The Glory* (1994), Wouk continued the story from the late 1960s to the bombing of Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981.

Wouk's books have been translated into some 30 languages. His novels display narrative skill, satire, and humor. They are meticulously researched and have won admiration for historical accuracy. Wouk have received several awards, including Pulitzer Prize (1952), Columbia University Medal of Excellence (1952) Hamilton medal (1980); American Academy of Achievement Golden Plate award (1986), *Washingtonian* award (1986), U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation award (1987), Kazetnik award (1990). He also have several honorary degrees from American and Israeli universities.

For further reading: *The Historical Novel : A Celebration of the Achievements of Herman Wouk*, ed. by Barbara A. Paulson (1999); *World Authors 1900-1950*, ed. by Martin Seymour-Smith and Andrew C. Kimmens (1996, vol. 4); *Herman Wouk* by Laurence W. Mazzeno (1994); *Herman Wouk: The Novelist as Social Historian* by Arnold Beichman (1984) - **See also:** Leon Uris's *Exodus* - **For further information:** *The Winds of War*; *Marjorie Morningstar*; *The Caine*

Mutiny**Selected works:**

- The Man in the Trench Coat, 1941
- Aurora Dawn, 1947
- The City Boy, 1948 - *also filmed*
- The Traitor, 1949 (play)
- Modern Primitive, 1951 (play)
- The Caine Mutiny, 1951 - Cainen kapina - Pulitzer Price in 1952 - *film 1954, dir. by Edward Dmytryk, starring Humphrey Bogart, José Ferrer, Van Johnson, Fred MacMurray.* - The film was one of the top five box-office hits of 1954 and received Academy Award nominations for Best Picture, Screenplay, Score, Actor (Humphrey Bogart), Supporting Actor (Tom Tully), Editing. **"Bogart is not convincing... Dmytryk's direction is defective... The court martial itself, which is exploited so dramatically on the stage, is thrown away in the film... If Hollywood films are to continue to gnaw at the intangibles which support our armed forces... let them, at least, be as well-made and as cinematic as From Here to Eternity."** (Henrietta Lehman, *Films and Review*, June/July, 1954)
- The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial, 1953 (play)
- Marjorie Morningstar, 1955 - Marjorie - *film 1958, dir. by Irving Rapper, starring Natalie Wood, Gene Kelly*
- Slattery's Hurricane, 1956
- Nature's Way, 1957 (play)
- This is My God: The Jewish Way of Life, 1959 (revised ed. 1973)
- Youngblood Hawke, 1961 - Menestyksen hinta - *film 1964, dir. by Delmer Daves, starring James Franciscus, Genevieve Page*
- Don't Stop the Carnival, 1965 - Karnevaalit
- The Lomokome Papers, 1968
- The Winds of War, 1971 - Sodan tuulet I-II - *television film 1983, produced and directed by Dan Curtis, written by Herman Wouk, starring Jan-Michael Vincent, Robert Mitchum, Ali MacGraw, John Houseman*
- War and Remembrance, 1978 - translated into Finnish in four parts: Hyvästi huominen, Maailmanpalo, Tulipilven takana, Sodan mainingit - *television film 1986*
- Inside, Outside, 1985 - Manhattan
- The Hope, 1993
- The Glory, 1994
- The Will to Live on: The Resurgence of Jewish Heritage, 2000

BUY

click here

amazon.com

© 2000

