



Kurt Vonnegut: A Critical Companion (Critical Companions to Popular Contemporary Writers)

Thomas Marvin

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With a career spanning 50 years, Kurt Vonnegut is one of the most prolific and popular American writers of the 20th century. Though his works have often met with mixed reviews, and have been difficult to categorize, his status of cultural icon and one of the most important contemporary novelists is well established. This critical companion, perfect for students, skillfully guides readers through seven of Vonnegut's most important novels including *Player Piano* (1952), *Mother Night* (1961), *Cat's Cradle* (1963), and *Slaughterhouse Five* (1969). A full chapter is devoted to each work, with clear analysis of plot, character development, thematic concerns, symbolism, and a close critical reading. A chapter on the life of Kurt Vonnegut gives an up-to-date biography, with interesting details relating the facts of his life to his writings. The Literary Contexts section, devoted to examining issues of genre, influences and themes in Vonnegut's writing, adds to a fuller understanding of the man and his literary works.

This exceptionally well-written Critical Companion will help students and interested readers appreciate Vonnegut's most important and popular novels. Close critical readings offer feminist, Marxist, and new historicist perspectives on these works. A bibliography helps students undertaking research identify additional sources for biographical and critical information, and provides reviews and a comprehensive list of Vonnegut's publications to date.

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