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An Annotated Bibliography:
Secondary Sources of Truman Capote

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to complete Truman Capote’s secondary bibliography up to today to deepen Capote’s study. As there has been no published bibliography that covers recent years, this annotated bibliography will provide an easier research and further understanding of Capote.

An Annotated Bibliography: Secondary Sources of Capote consists of 101 articles and books written in English which are considered to be useful for Capote’s study. As Robert J. Stanton’s Truman Capote: A Primary and Secondary Bibliography (1980) offers extensive coverage and detailed annotation for all writings on Capote before 1978, this bibliography attempts to supply information of secondary sources after its publication. To avoid missing of materials, this
bibliography contains secondary publication of Capote from 1977 to 2002. The materials are arranged in the combination of chronological and alphabetical order. Materials that are written in the same year are listed together and lined up by author’s name. As for materials with several editions, I intended to list the latest version. Index supports when searching.

The main research sources are MLA International Bibliographies, Humanities Index, Book Review Digest, and Dissertation Abstract International. I also used NACSIS Webcat <http://webcat.nii.ac.jp> and selective bibliographies available as sub-sources. Most of the bibliographical information is based on the research results as of June 2003. I used “Truman Capote” as a keyword for searching. I omitted materials that include the word but scarcely discuss on Capote’s works or his literary intentions. I also left out Capote’s primary sources such as interviews.

Late 1970s to the beginning of 1980s saw maturation of Capote’s study. Several books and bibliographies were published in this period. Helen S. Garson’s Truman Capote (1980), Kenneth T. Reed’s Truman Capote (1981), and Robert J. Stanton’s Truman Capote: A Primary and Secondary Bibliography (1980) attempt to give a entire picture of Capote. Most studies in 1980s and in 1990s
concentrates on Capote’s self proclaimed new literary form, “non-fiction.” However, the discussions are somehow different. Studies in 1980s focuses mainly on the style of nonfiction whereas later studies show interest in Capote’s literary contribution and try to place Capote in New Journalism. There are some criticisms that focus on other aspects of Capote. After Capote’s death in 1984, several biographical writings were published such as Gerald Clarke’s *Capote: A Biography* (1988) and the writer’s sexuality started to be a matter of consideration. In 1999, *The Critical Response to Truman Capote* by Joseph J. Waldmeir and John C. Waldmeir was published to reconsider Capote’s study. As its title suggests, the compiled criticisms are written from various points of view. It can be said that Capote’s study underwent another maturation. Now in 2000s, Capote’s works are in the free discussion. The studies in the next decades must be worthy of notice.

**Lists of Abbreviations**

*Delta*  |  *Delta: Revue du Centred’ Etudes et de Recherche sur les Ecrivains du Sud aux Etats Unis.* 34032 Montpellier Cedex, France.

*Response*  |  *Critical Response to Truman Capote.* Eds. Joseph J. Waldmeir and John C. Waldmeir.
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1977


Examines New Journalism and nonfiction novel in 1960s. Deals with Capote’s *In Cold Blood* and the texts of Mailer and Wolfe. In chapter four, Hollowell suggests that Capote’s form did not allow him to create “new genre” since it descends tradition.

1978


Compares Capote’s “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” with the film version of Blake Edwards. Clark suggests the differences of interpretation. Especially, Clark puts emphasis on the change in the heroine’s character and in the problem of sexuality.

Suggests Wolfe’s effect on Capote. Woodward points out that the theme and the use of the words in *Other Voices, Other Rooms* resembles that of Wolfe’s. Woodward indicates that Capote’s using of Wolfe’s textbook in his school days.

1979


Attacks deficiency of Capote’s style in the novel. DeBellis points out that revisions of the text and the sympathy for the murderer did not allow Capote to write a “nonfiction novel.” DeBellis suggests that Capote’s wish to achieve fame obstructed his intention to create a new literary form.

1980


Discusses on the novel from the legendary perspective. Blake asserts that Capote borrowed imagery from legend. Blake explains that the idea of the search for identity reflects Arthurian
knight romance.


Cardinal, Esther K. “Journalistic Fiction: A Development from Early American Realism.” Ph. D. thesis, Kent State U. 1980. Explains that New Journalism is a union of journalism and fiction. Cardinal states that facts gathered by reportage and research were used as readily as ‘made up’ facts for the basic material for fiction and indicates that Capote’s *In Cold Blood* and Wolfe’s works as best examples of the form of new journalism. [DAI-A41/08(1981) AAT 8100679]

in the novel. Davis indicates that the novel is filled with visual metaphor that as a whole represent a single scene.

Describes Capote’s ability as a writer by examining Music for Chameleons. Fowles compares Capote to Maupassant in that he becomes a victim of what he writes. Fowles observes that Capote’s attempt to combine fact and fiction was to avoid falling into narcissism.

Makes a close analysis of Capote’s major works. Garson implies the relationship between the author’s life and his stories, and attempts to give an entire picture of Capote. Bibliography and index are included.

Deals with allegorical pattern in the novel. Hellmann indicates that Capote combined allegory
to the fact to write his nonfiction novel. According to Hellmann, the Bible, classic American literatures, and the detective story are major sources that Capote drew on.

Kanfer, Stefan. “Music for Chameleons by Truman Capote.” _The New Republic_. 6, 13 Sept. 1980: 30-32. Describes the work by examining Capote’s multilateralness. Kanfer proclaims that Capote’s power comes from his weakness. Kanfer observes that the work is merely a warmed over, yet its stories will remain because they entertain.

Larsen, Michael J. “Capote’s ‘Miriam’ and the Literature of the Double.” _International Fiction Review_. 7 (1980): 35-54. Examines the theme of the double in the work. Larsen insists that the story is more complex than other double stories that it needs to be distinguished. Larsen observes that Capote’s contribution to the double literature is combining actuality and the element of Doppelgänger together.

Compiles primary and secondary sources of Capote from the beginning of his literary career to 1978. The book consists of two sections. Primary sources are arranged in chronological order, whereas secondary sources are arranged in alphabetical order by year. Index for both author’s name and title.


Discusses on the literary value of the nonfiction novel. Examines In Cold Blood by comparing it to Dreiser’s An American Tragedy. Vidan explains that the work lacks style, personal philosophy nor statement. Vidan concludes that, by lack of authoritative intentions, that the work lost the valuable position in literature.


Lists publications of Capote from 1946 to 1980.
Consists of three sections. Section A offers a list of Capote’s own literary works, whereas section B offers a list of publications which include Capote’s writings and interviews. Supplementary section adds information of Capote’s dramatic scripts for television and film.

1981


Collects reminiscences of the author’s relationship with Capote and others. The reminiscences are based on the author’s journal and focuses on conversations. As for Capote, Brinnin recollects Capote’s early stage of his literary career.


Explains that the theme of *In Cold Blood* is the monster like his early works. Jones observes that Capote has moved from writing psychic monsters to writing monsters in the society. Jones asserts that Capote has been a “demon-haunted Southern writer”
Suggests fictionality in “Handcarved Coffins.” Lodge asserts that the story is not truth but a literary fiction. Lodge points out its lack of evidences and the structural pattern of detective story. Lodge also tries to determine the difference between “fictionality” and “literariness.”

Examines Capote’s major works from early short fictions to later reportage. Also makes an analysis of the characteristics of Capote’s writings in the last chapter. Reed attempts to support the first step of Capote study. Index and a brief chronology are included.

1983
Collects reminiscences of Capote’s aunt on his mother’s side. Rudisill recollects Capote’s boyhood
through Alabama to New York. Capote denied its accuracy in his life time. Index is included.

1984


Discusses on the nature of the nonfiction novel by looking into the work. Siegel observes that despite Capote’s effort to discover a new style, he is haunted by the traditional distinction of fiction and nonfiction. Siegel shows that difference between the two is only a rhetoric strategy and thus the term “nonfiction novel” is a tautology.


Examines the theme of androgyny in the works of six American writers: Anderson, Barnes, Capote & etc. Riedell observes that peculiarities of these authors are conflict with an androgynous identity and an arbitrary sex roles, and literary genre of grotesque. Riedell concludes that these writers are social critics who commented on the repressive
nature of society, which values masculine qualities and denigrates feminine qualities.

[DAI-A45/01(1984) AAT8409348]

1985

Discusses on Capote’s literary attempt. Looks into Capote’s major works. Bawer suggests that Capote’s interest developed from drawing individual to drawing reality. Bawer concludes that Capote’s attachment for realism limited his creativity as an literary artist.

Gives a brief biography of Capote. Bonner sees Capote as a Southern writer, despite his denial. Bonner explains that ability to create a certain mood and focus on the personal problems is characteristics of Capote’s writings.
Lays a commemorative tribute to Capote. Dickey observes that Capote’s ability to concentrate produced his works and compare them to crystals. Dickey suggests that Capote’s intense concentration lived throughout his career and his life.

Lays poetic tribute to Capote. Dickey compares Capote’s talent to a crystal.

1986
Points out the problems of journalism by looking into Capote’s “Handcarved Coffins” and other two works by Wolfe and Mailer. Hersey indicates that Capote arranges too much of his work that it is beyond the boundary of journalism.

Explains the difference between new journalism and nonfiction narrative by comparing *In Cold Blood* and Mailer’s text. McCord suggests that Capote’s quest for single reality and the subjectivity of the narrative comes from traditional journalism.

Zumbrunnen, Wanita Ann. “A Literary Search to Identify Factors Necessary for an Individual Sense of Justice: Capote’s *In Cold Blood* and Solzhenitsyn’s *The Canser Ward*.” Ph. D. thesis, U of Iowa. 1986. Examines the development of sense of justice of an individual. Looks into Capote’s *In Cold Blood* and Sozhenitsyn’s work. Zumbrunnen asserts that the acquisition of a sense of justice has an emotional basis modified by the process of thought and indicates that Capote considered a sun emotional base is necessary to become a just individual. [DAI-A 47/12(1987) AAT8708045]

1987

Examines other writer’s influence on Capote’s writings. Allmendinger suggests that Capote’s “My Side of the Matter” bears clear marks of Welty’s work and observes that fear for influence leads Capote to search for literary identity in the work.


Discusses on Capote’s narrative strategy. Anderson remarks that authorial silence is the characteristic of both Capote’s fiction and nonfiction. Anderson explains that the rhetorical effect is to draw the reader into the action and to demand them to read further at the same time.


Analyses the rhetoric of the works of New Journalism. Deals with Wolfe, Capote, Mailer, and Didion. As for Capote, Anderson looks into In Cold Blood and several other nonfiction writings. Anderson observes that Capote’s use of authorial silence can be seen in both his fiction and nonfiction.
Introduction, bibliography, and index are included.

Records author’s relationship with Capote. Focuses on the first seventeen years of their relationship. Brinnin attempts to shed a light on the unknown side of Capote. Index is included.

Describes Capote’s losing of prestige by “Answered Prayers.” Brown observes that Capote was out of control in his life and in his art that that he could not meet the demands of nonfiction. Brown remarks that the work shows the seduction of writer Capote by socialite Capote.

Portraits Capote from the eyes of his companion. Dunphy juxtaposes fictional story against his memory with Capote. Index is included.

Proposes a new theory for nonfiction by examining the two opposing criticism of *In Cold Blood*. Heyne suggests that nonfiction has both elements of reality and literary aesthetics that it demands evaluation from both perspectives.


Explains “Answered Players” by Capote’s corruption. Richardson indicates that Capote’s attempt to attack the Society turn out to be fatal for him.

1988


Records complete biography of Capote. Divided into four sections. Clarke focuses on both Capote’s life and his literary career. Capote placed confidence in Clarke and supplied him with information in his life time. Index is included.
[DAI-A49/06(1988) AAT8815433]

1989

Examines literary value of In Cold Blood. Collet suggests that the work has proved that literary meanings and truth can exist in the same text. Collet implies that different types of presentation need different way of judgment.
Defines Capote’s writings as an early example of early American Magic Realism. Author suggests that Capote’s works puzzled readers that there has been very little criticism. Author traces the root of Magic Realism in art and literature and examines the characteristics of its writings.
[DAI-A50/08 (1990) AAT8925603]

Aims at showing that journalistic writings can be elevated to an artistic level by the use of literary devices. Gives examples of the New Journalism and nonfiction novels. Tanrisal explains the work of Capote, Wolfe, and Mailer. According to the authors, the general tendency towards factual artistic writing in the 60s is explained by the rise of new journalism. [DAI-A50/06(1989) AAT8921886]

1990

Skinner, John. "Ghosts and Special Features: Daniel


Chui, Hanping. “Nonfiction Novel, Historical Novel, and
Looks into the growing significance of history and fact in literature, especially in the 1960s. Deals with historical or nonfiction novel of Heresys, Capote, Styron, and Doctorow. Chui insists that fact and fiction are inseparable as well as history and imagination. Fact and history are fictive in reality as they are shaped by language and ideology. [DAI-A 52/2 (1991) Not Available from UMI.]

1992

Examines the narrative in homicide trial novel of Capote’s In Cold Blood and others. Points out the combination of law and literature as characteristics of these works. According to Algeo, law offers a forum to literature when literature offers a form to law. Algeo says that the combination of the two makes the trial scene effective. [DAI-A53.5 (1992) AAT 9226050]

Examines Capote's short fictions including "Answered Prayers." Garson makes an analysis of the works and the writer in the first half of the book and introduces some criticisms in the latter half. Garson indicates that the short fictions connect Capote's other works. Chronology, selected bibliography and index are included.


Describes Capote's method and absorption and creation. Goad suggests that *Other Voices, Other Rooms* and *In Cold Blood* display both technical innovation and thematic significance. Goad asserts that Capote used the materials of his life to as the subject matter of his writings. Capote's technique, however, intersected with the terrible materials of *In Cold Blood* that it produced catastrophic results.


Whitby, Gary L. "Truman Capote," A Sourcebook of
Discusses on Capote’s nonfiction writings. Divided into three sections of Local Color, Interviewing and Profiling, and In Cold Blood. Whitby concludes that Capote made significant contributions to literary journalism.

1993
Examines the work from psychological dynamics. Conniff observes that Capote draws a community bond maintained by excluding everything odd to them. Conniff states that Capote unconsciously becomes a part of this communal justice by giving an apparently reasonable ending.

1994
Considers a woman quality in Capote. Als suggests that Capote’s consciousness and works resembles
that of women writers. Als indicates that Capote’s writing career represents his effort and struggle to become a masculine writer.


Examines the narrative discourse in literary nonfiction. Capote’s *In Cold Blood*, and Thompson, Didion’s works are being focused. Harred remarks that fictional nature of discourse in these works enables to represent a world beyond language. Chapter2 focuses on Capote’s use of narrative. Harred mentions that connection between desire and deviance, closure’s association with death, and meditation on Otherness are characteristics of Capote’s work.[DAI-A 55/7 (1995) AAT9433052]

197-208.
Explains the beginning of New Journalism and its characteristics. Deals with the works of Hersey, Mailer, and Capote’s *In Cold Blood*. Tonn mentions that the characteristics of Capote’s writings are focus on criminals’ mind and the impersonal objectivity.

1995
Analyses the failure of the dramatic version of *The Grass Harp*. Garson indicates that the destruction of the drama is caused by the change in the characters, plot and style. Carson considers that by elimination of narration, Capote failed to represent vulnerable quality of the novella.

Examines Wilde’s influences on Twentieth-century gay and bisexual artists. Waldrep mentions that
Wilde became the paradigm of the artists. In chapter 4, Waldrep explains that Capote’s experimental reportage works of *Music for Chameleons* and *Answered Players* as the heritage of Wilde’s queer performance.

[DAI-A57/1 (1996) AAT 9613889]

1996


Examines the contention that certain crimes represent the era which they occur. As for Capote, Algeo analyses the trial scene and Capote’s narrative choice in *In Cold Blood*. Index is included. Original thesis was written in 1992.


Reconsiders *In Cold Blood* from several points of view. Garret sees the work as the best of Capote’s novel, however casts a doubt about its accuracy. Garret rather thinks that the work is a ‘historical landmark’ that reflect the change in the sense of
value in the 1960s.

Collects reminiscences of Capote’s cousin. Records the memory of Jennings Faulk Carter with young Capote. Concentrates mainly on Capote’s childhood in Alabama, however, gives some information about his later life. Index and family tree are included.

Shows the details of Capote’s participation in writing the script of movie “Beat the Devil.” The reminiscences are edited from Plimpton’s oral biography on Capote.

1997

Explores Capote’s narrative method in the novel. Hollowell explains that Capote’s narrator shows the possibility of giving rational order to the senseless murder, however, leaves many problems unsolved. Hollowell asserts that Capote’s structure does not offer any reasonable answer and keeps its readers wondering.

Complies various voices about Capote and his work. Attempts to reveal new information about Capote’s way of dealing with the murder, and his influence on the community on the place of the murder. Plimpton remarks that this collection should be called “oral narrative” rather than “oral biography.”

Shows the episode when Capote first met jazz singer Peggy Lee. Rader observes that Capote opens his mind when others show their vulnerability. Edited from Truman Capote’s oral biography.
Suggests a possibility of Auden’s influence on Capote. Whitehead points out that the use of the word “hedeola” by the heroine resembles Auden’s poem, “Music is International” (1947).

1998

Asks for a better criticism for *In Cold Blood*. Kerrigan observes that the work has a literary value that it demands further studying. Kerrigan suggests the development of critical pluralism and the improvement of literary critical environment for writers.

Offers a reading of *Other Voices, Other Rooms* free
from traditional criticism. Pugh insists that the work has been labeled “gothic” too easily. Pugh suggests that Capote’s Gothicism has close relationship with sentimentalism.

1999

Deals with Capote use of metaphor. Discusses on Other Voices, Other Rooms and A Tree of Night and Other Stories. Aldridge observes that Capote expressed his theme by metaphors rather than symbols. Aldridge suggests that dependency on the devices is one of Capote’s limitations as an artist.

Describes In Cold Blood as one of Western American literatures. Allmendinger points out that male same-sex relationship often appears in Western American literature. Allmendinger suggests that relationship between the two criminals and Capote’s attachment to one of them resembles prototypes in
frontier literature.


Bentley asserts that triteness is everywhere in the play because it is nothing similar to Capote’s original. Bentley remarks that the stage is saved from ridiculous impression by its common theme, search for identity.


Examines Capote’s works and reputation as gay-male author. Deals with OVOR, In Cold Blood, and Answered Prayers. Christensen implies that homosexuality did not lower Capote’s status but promoted him to higher position as a writer.


Summarizes writings about Capote after 1978. Covers
only major criticisms but each item has a brief annotation.

Praises Capote’s short stories. Fielder observes Capote’s ability to control tone, an honest tenderness ward his characters he can understand and a splendid sense of humor should be remarked more often.

Considers fiction in In Cold Blood. Calloway compares Capote’s method with that of Mailer’s and Wolfe’s. Galloway concludes that the work is one kind of postwar American fiction.

Hassan, Ihab H. “The Daydream and Nightmare Narcissus.” Wisconsin Studies in Contemporary Literature. 1,
Explains Capote’s writing styles by classifying his works to two types: “daylight” and “nocturnal” styles. Hassan discusses on Capote’s major works. Hassan observes that the both styles are imaginative, however, represent reality.

Discusses on the emergence of the new type of American Heroine/Hero. Hassan explains Holly Golightly in “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” represent typical attitudes struck in the post-war novel. Hassan points out that they are innocent fugitive of American life.

Discusses on the misalliance of Capote’s work with Broadway musical stage. Hayes asserts that the combination of the two in the stage “House of Flowers.” Hayes observes that the attractiveness
of the both parties is reduced by the concession.

Examines history and postmodernism in "Handcarved Coffins." Hicks suggests that Capote is conventional in theme and technique that the work is not postmodern. Hicks indicate Capote's desire for historic/mythic continuity.

Criticizes The Grass Harp as an imitation. Lazarus points out that the novel is a warmed over of other American novels. Lazarus remarks that Capote is good at creation of moods and is disappointed in him for abusing his talent.

Considers symbolized theme in Capote’s works. Deals with Capote’s major works. Levine points out that Capote draws encounter with an external force which synchronizes with the realization of the self. Levine indicates that Capote’s theme is related to the real world.


Looks into Oedipal theme in the novel. Mengeling explains that the novel expresses the process in which the protagonist overcome the Oedipus complex. However, Mengeling points out that this development is twisted because the protagonist’s love is the extension of the oedipal process.


Compares crime novels of Dreiser and Capote. McAleer suggests that An American Tragedy and In Cold Blood both represent warped pursuit of American Dream. McAleer explains that capote’s method to be realistic obscured this major theme.


Examines the representation of dream in the works of Capote and Porter. Nance explains dream as a vision of the ideal existence. Nance indicates that Capote's use of dream in his works started from description of nightmare and then changed to drawing of “dreamer-victim.”


Insists the lack of ability of Capote as a playwright. Nathan attempts to show that the play, The Grass Harp was a failure. Although, Nathan admits Capote’s talent as a writer, he disbelieves his talent for the stage due to his lack of experiences.


Discusses on the narrative form in gothic writings of Capote and Others. As for Capote, Perry deals with Other Voices, Other Rooms. Perry indicates
that not only images and themes but the structure plays an important role in gothic novels.

Collects interviews of Capote’s acquaintances and others. Comments are lined in the chronological order of Capote’s life, and called “oral biography” by the author. Chronology, information of contributors, and index are included.

Locates *Answered Prayers* in Capote’s literary Career. Rafferty indicates the novel is the final project of Capote. Rafferty suggests that Capote failed to complete this project because he could not figure out nor make up himself.

Examines Capote’s journalistic enterprise. Trilling asserts that *In Cold Blood* is the artistic defeat and not discover of nonfiction. Trilling insists that capote’s initial plan to submit to actuality is collapsed by his intention to manipulate the facts for dramatization.


Explains Southern writers’ influence on Capote’s writings. Tuttle suggests that *In Cold Blood* bears clear marks of McCullers. Tuttle mentions that Capote took advantage of the predecessors.


Discusses on comprehensive matters of *In Cold Blood.* Tynan doubts Capote’s sympathy for the murders and accuses him for not saving their lives. Tynan asserts that Capote wrote the novel with cold blood.

Waldmeir, John C. “Religion and Style in *The Dogs Bark*
Collects twenty five critical essays on Capote. Includes chronology, introduction, bibliography, and index. Introduction shows an outline of Capote’s literary career.

Examines the art form of nonfiction novel by looking into *In Cold Blood*. Wiegand thinks that Capote’s achievement was to suggest and extend the capacity that “all Art forms share.”

2000
Mitchell Peters, Brian. “Camping the Gothic: Queering Sexuality in Truman Capote’s Other Voices, Other
Discusses on the presentation of homosexuality in the work. Explains Capote’s queerness, homosexuality in the South, southern queer desires, and queer adolescents. Mitchell Peters asserts that Capote gave birth to queer representation through the text.

Printz, Neil. “‘Other Voices, Other Rooms’: Between Andy Warhol and Truman Capote, 1948-1961.” Ph. D. thesis, City U of NY. 2000. Explains Capote’s influence on Warhol’s works. According to Printz, “Other Voices Other Rooms” played an important role in representing his homosexuality as an art. His homosexual images are considered to be originated from the novel.

television. Wells indicates that Capote uses elements of “naturalistic social protest,” “traditional realism,” and “postmodernism.” Above all, Wells points out that the work is a historic record of postwar change in American culture.


Deals with writer’s authority in creative nonfiction. Explains the characteristics of a first-person nonfiction narrator of Wolfe and Capote. Whittle points out that Capote’s narrator in In Cold Blood is less omniscient than that of Wolfe’s. [DAI-A61/7 (2001) AAT9980761]

2001


Recollects the author’s relationship with creative figures such as Capote, Picasso and etc. In the chapter of Capote, Richardson introduces an episode associated with Answered Prayers. Index is
Explains the development of "New Journalism." Rance observes new journalism as the method to perceive events that are beyond conventional understanding. Rance suggests the similarity between In Cold Blood and the Vietnam War.

Explains the presence of homosexuality in "Tiffany’s." Pugh suggests that queer world of the heroine indicates the "sexual dynamics" of the work. Pugh asserts that her world represents her struggle against conformity and conservatism.
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