

PWR Newsletter



*I self-published
my diaries!*



Anaïs Nin

(February 21, 1903 – January 14, 1977)



PUBLISHED WRITERS OF ROSSMOOR



PUBLISHED WRITERS OF ROSSMOOR



A Club to Celebrate and Support Aspiring and Published Authors



March 3, 2018

Volume VII, Issue 3

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Coming up!
This Saturday, March 3, 2018
From 9:45 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
In the Fairway Room at Creekside Clubhouse

Come early and enjoy complimentary coffee or tea!

March's Speaker: Maureen O'Rourke on Writing Press Releases

BY PETER LI



Peter Li

Rossmoor residents interested in writing creative and interesting press releases are invited to PWR's meeting on March 3 in the Fairway Room at Creekside Club House. The featured speaker is Maureen O'Rourke, one of our own, the Director of Communications and Managing Editor of the *Rossmoor News*.

Maureen has been with the *Rossmoor News* since 1979, after receiving her master's degree in English literature from San Francisco State University. She started out as a copy editor and quickly worked her way up to Managing Editor of the *Rossmoor News* and Director of Communications, which requires her to oversee two websites and the Rossmoor TV station.

Maureen manages a staff of 15 people, directing a newspaper that has grown

from 36 to over 60 pages. Her talk will focus on why the *Rossmoor News* follows the AP style, the importance of writing concise, to-the-point press releases, and how to write a lively and captivating press release.

As writers, we are all interested in knowing what happens to the letters, essays, articles, and press releases that we submit to the *News*. Maureen will lead us through the entire process. □



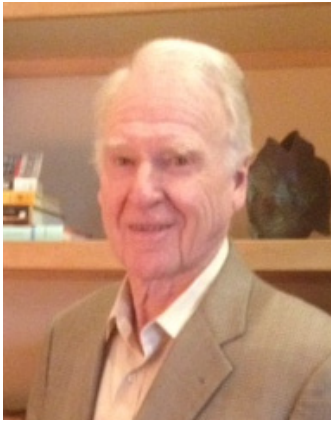
Maureen O'Rourke



Anaïs Nin

The President's Page

BY RON WREN



Ron Wren

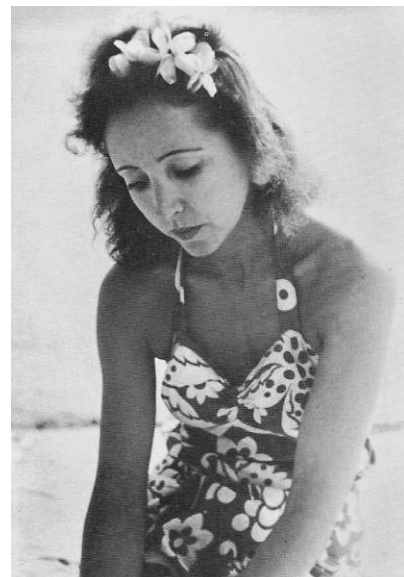
Maureen O'Rourke, a writer's writer, will speak to us on the difference between a boring press release and the kind of creative writing that PWR members like to do.

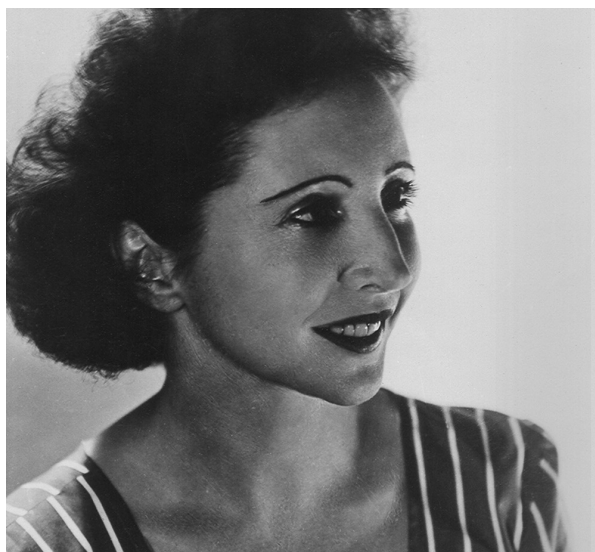
A graduate of San Francisco State, Maureen will tell about her decision to reject teaching English literature in favor of a career with the *Rossmoor News* as the Director of Communications.

This is a unique opportunity for PWR members to learn the importance of concise writing, why the *Rossmoor News* and most other news publications follow the AP style, and how to benefit from following the entire process from a news release submission to a story in the newspaper.

I encourage all PWR members to attend this unique presentation to hear from a pro—not just for press release techniques but to learn about stylistic approaches that apply to all aspects of good writing and successful publishing.

PWR is dedicated to supporting both aspiring and accomplished authors in publishing and promoting their books. All residents of Rossmoor are welcome to attend its programs. For more information on the club, visit its website at www.Rossmoor-writers.com or contact me at ronwren@aol.com □





Vegetarian Circle

By GENE GORDON



Gene Gordon

Spencer's Vegetarianism: A History is a comprehensive work of scholarship that begins in pre-history and ends in the present day. The vegetarian diet has been around for as long as humans have. Vegetarians have included heretics, humanists, Hindus, Christian fundamentalists, radicals, agnostics, philosophers, and founders of religions.

Vegetarianism: A History is very entertaining, but also horrifying in places. Spencer shows that vegetarians have often been discriminated against—tortured and even killed for their beliefs.

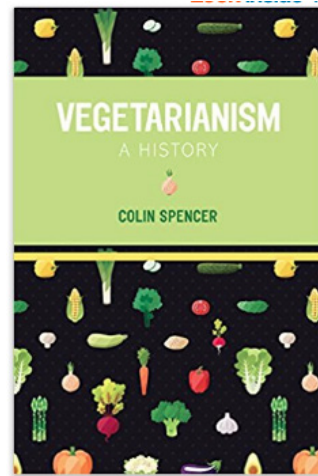
Forty-six of Spencer's books are available on Amazon. □

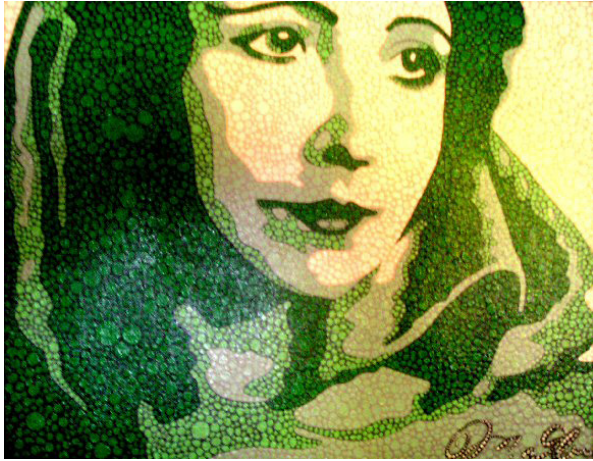
Vegetarian Writer of the Month: Colin Spencer

Colin Spencer, a vegetarian, is a remarkable English writer who has published short stories, novels, and nonfiction works, including histories of food and of homosexuality. He has written many stage and television plays as well as eighteen cookbooks. For fourteen years, he wrote a regular food column for *The Guardian*.



Colin Spencer





A Novel with Any Readers?

BY JON FOYT



Jon Foyt

So, now what do you think I might do? With my soon-to-be-published novel, that is.

What's it about? The homeless.

Trouble is, while the book suggests a solution, most people have their minds made up about the homeless. Or do they?

Y'all probably do. I don't. That's why I wrote the novel—my fifteenth. Or is sixteenth?

The title is *Homeward Bound*—but what if there is no home?"

It's not a "feel good" story. The protagonist is an Irish immigrant. Is that the hook?

It's an idea novel. No, maybe it's a message novel. No, maybe, inasmuch as almost everyone seems to have made up their minds about the homeless, it's a novel almost everyone will disagree with. But do you read a novel to agree or disagree?

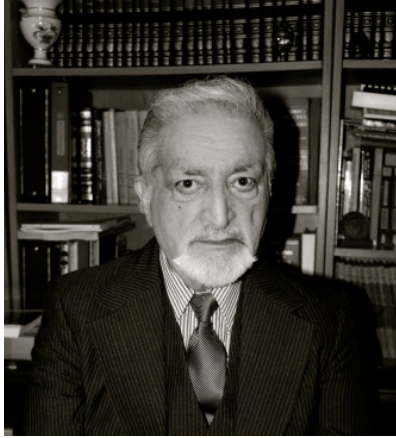
So, what do you think I could do? □





Review of a Novel by Bashir “Ben” Zikria

BY PAUL FITZGERALD AND ELIZABETH GOULD



Ben Zikria

PWR member Professor B. A. Zikria has written a beautifully crafted and historically rich novel, *Malalai, Joan of Arc of Afghanistan and the Victors of Maiwand*, which is about an idealistic American physician named Scott Fitzgerald. Born in 1850 in Chester, Pennsylvania, in the same house as his father and grandfather, Scott has a very clear mission as a doctor: to serve mankind regardless of race, gender, or status.

That goal is matched by his equally strong commitment to living the ideals of freedom embodied in the American Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Starting when he is a young man, these beliefs become the foundation of his inspiration as he travels the world to find the meaning of his life, studying a fifty-year history of people in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Scott's travels begin in earnest when he decides to go to Afghanistan, the country in which his father, Brian, had journeyed and then lived for nearly twenty years. Brian was the first American observer and advisor in the first Anglo-Afghan War (1838–1842). He became a close friend and mentor to Prince Akbar, a great hero in the Afghan war against the British. In tribute to their friendship, Brian wrote a book entitled *The Afghan Prince and I: The First American in Afghanistan*. However, Brian died before he was able to fulfill his wish to return to Afghanistan, his true love, one last time.

Scott's motivation to travel is triggered after the tragic death of the love of his life, Virginia, caused by what he describes as archaic mores and traditions. Scott is thrown into total despair, so to save himself from his grief he decides to plan a trip to Afghanistan on his father's behalf.

After Scott saves enough money from his medical practice, his travels begin when he leaves from his home in Philadelphia headed for London on a passenger liner as the ship's doctor. He has already communicated with London-based Madame Biller, a dear friend of his father, who agrees to help him when he arrives. Madame Biller is better than her word as she introduces Scott to London's finest society. But he also observes and is moved by the abject poverty of the very poor.

Scott is reminded that while the

ideals set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution do not always deliver on the promise of a better life for all those willing to come to America, that promise does not exist at all anywhere else in the world.

This observation sets the tone for the rest of the story as Scott travels on to Paris, Berlin, Saint Petersburg, Tashkent, Herat, Kabul, Karachi, Calcutta, Singapore, Hong Kong, Tokyo, and finally back to Philadelphia. In each location, Scott finds generous and thoughtful soulmates to dialogue with about the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness throughout history. These exchanges are filled with fresh ideas about the impact of the greatest thinkers on society, science, philosophy, and religion.

Although most of this story takes place outside the United States, no matter where Scott travels in the world his beloved American values go with him.

As an American born in Afghanistan, Zikria draws deeply on his own love of these values and his expertise as a physician, poet, scientist, philosopher, and historian to create a story that can inspire all Americans. □



In Daliel's Bookstore & Gallery in Berkeley, 1946



From the Editor



Paul Weisser

Anaïs Nin, Self-Publisher

Angela Anaïs Juana Antolina Rosa Edelmira Nin y Culmell, known to the world as Anaïs Nin (pronounced “ON-nuh-ees NEEN”), was born on February 21, 1903, in Neuilly-sur-Seine, a suburb of Paris, France, to Joaquín Nin, a Cuban pianist and composer of Catalan Spanish descent, and Rosa Culmell, a classically-trained Cuban singer of French and Danish descent.



Anaïs was seriously ill as a young child and nearly died twice from various internal organ afflictions. If not for a kind Belgian couple and the care of three Belgian nurses, she might never have made the impact on literature and the feminist movement that she did later on in life.

Beginning at age 11, Anaïs wrote journals prolifically for six decades and even up until her death. Her journals, many of which were published during her lifetime, detail her private thoughts and personal relationships, as well as her sexually abusive and incestuous relationship with her father when she was 9—which she briefly reprised when she was 30, as described in her first book of fiction, *House of Incest* (1936)



Anaïs was raised a Roman Catholic, but left the Church at the age of 16. Her parents separated when she was two, at which point her mother moved Anaïs and her two brothers to Barcelona, and then to New York City, where Anaïs attended high school. However, Anaïs dropped out of high school at about the same time that she left the Catholic Church, and began working as an artist's model.

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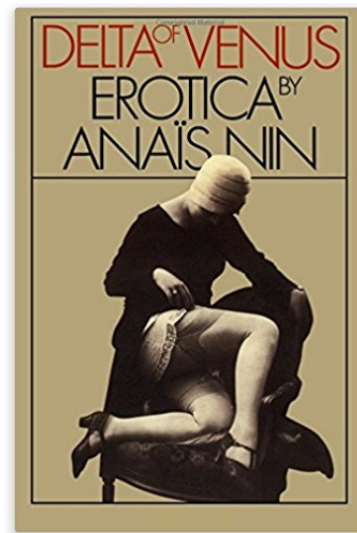


On March 3, 1923, at the age of 20, Anaïs married her first husband, Hugh Parker Guiler, in Havana, Cuba. Hugh was both a banker and an artist, who was later known as “Ian Hugo” when he became a maker of experimental films in the late 1940s. After a year, the couple moved to Paris, where Hugh pursued his banking career and Anaïs began to pursue her interest in writing. During this period, she also trained as a flamenco dancer.



But, most importantly, it was at this time that Anaïs first came across erotica. When she and Hugh rented the Paris apartment of an American man who was away for the summer, Anaïs came across a number of French paperbacks.

“One by one,” she wrote later, “I read these books, which were completely new to me. I had never read erotic literature in America.... They overwhelmed me. I was innocent before I read them, but by the time I had read them all, there was nothing I did not know about sexual exploits.... I had my degree in erotic lore.”

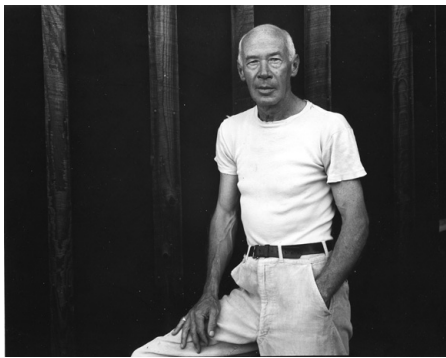


In fact, Anaïs Nin is hailed by many critics as one of the finest writers of female erotica. She was one of the first women known to explore fully the realm of erotic writing, and certainly the first prominent woman in the modern West known to write erotica. Before her, erotica acknowledged to be written by women was rare, with a few notable exceptions, such as the work of Kate Chopin. Anaïs often cited authors Djuna Barnes and D. H. Lawrence as inspirations, also mentioning in this context Marcel Proust, André Gide, Jean Cocteau, Paul Valéry, and Arthur Rimbaud.

(continued on page 14)



But it was Henry Miller, with whom Anaïs had a passionate affair during the Paris years, who had the greatest literary influence over her. She also aborted a pregnancy by him in 1934. Although this affair and many others are described in intimate detail in Anaïs's diaries, and she openly admits there to being married, Hugh is not mentioned anywhere, apparently by his request. No doubt, these stories would not have advanced his banking career.



Henry Miller

Anaïs was involved in the some of the most interesting literary and artistic movements of the twentieth century, including the Surrealist movement of the Thirties and Forties, the Beat movement of the Fifties, the avant garde crowd in California in the Sixties, and the women's movement of the Seventies.

Also, in the 1930s, Anaïs became profoundly interested in psychoanalysis and studied it extensively, first with René Allendy and then with Otto Rank, both of whom eventually became her lovers. In the late summer of 1939, when residents from overseas were urged to leave France due to the approaching war, Anaïs and Hugh left Paris for New York City.



Otto Rank

But Anaïs lived there, not with Hugh, but with Otto Rank, who had moved to America a little earlier. Amazingly, Anaïs then began to act as a psychoanalyst herself, seeing patients in the room next to Rank's, where she had sex with her patients on the psychoanalytic couch. She quit after several months, however, stating, "I found that I wasn't good because I wasn't objective. I was haunted by my patients. I wanted to intercede."



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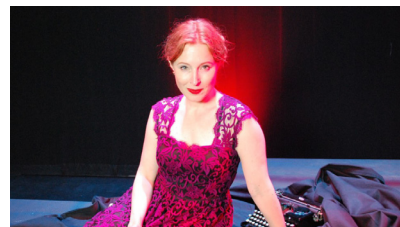
It was around this time that Anaïs published her first work, a critical evaluation of D. H. Lawrence entitled *D. H. Lawrence: An Unprofessional Study* (1932), which she wrote in sixteen days—the modest title reflecting her acknowledgment that she had no academic training. Nevertheless, the study was well received by critics.

In addition to Henry Miller, Anaïs was a friend, and in some cases lover, of many literary figures, including John Steinbeck, Antonin Artaud, Edmund Wilson, Gore Vidal, James Agee, James Leo Herlihy, and Lawrence Durrell.



She was also apparently attracted to Miller's second wife, June, although whether she ever consummated these feelings (despite Philip Kaufman's film, *Henry and June*) is unclear. At the very least, it is known that both Henry and Anaïs viewed June as an irresistible femme fatale, to whom Anaïs gave money, jewelry, and clothes, often leaving herself broke.

In 1935, Anaïs, Henry Miller, Lawrence Durrell, and other writers who were experiencing difficulty in finding publishers founded Siana Editions (Anaïs spelled backwards) to publish their own works. Even after Anaïs's books became popular in Europe, she couldn't find an American publisher.

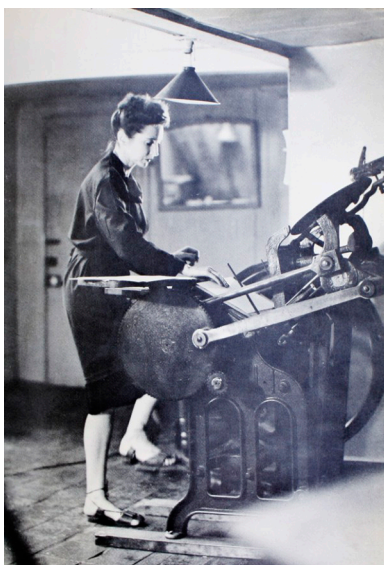


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Eventually, in January 1942, she bought a second-hand printing press and set up her own small print shop in a loft on MacDougal Street in New York, where she taught herself typesetting and did most of the manual work herself.

With this press, she self-published a new edition of her third book, *Winter of Artifice*, followed by other books of hers. Finally, her work caught the attention of critic Edmund Wilson, who praised her writing and helped her on the road to obtaining a traditional American publisher.



Notice the steam (the first printing revolution after Gutenberg)

But Anaïs's work with the printing press gave her a love for printing that rivaled her love for writing. "The relationship to handcraft," she wrote, "is a beautiful one. You are related bodily to a solid block of metal letters, to the weight of the trays, to the adroitness of spacing, to the tempo and temper of the machine. You acquire some of the weight and solidity of the metal, the strength and power of the machine. Each triumph is a conquest by the body, fingers, muscles. You live with your hands, in acts of physical deftness...."



"You pit your faculties against concrete problems. The victories are concrete, definable, touchable. A page of perfect printing. You can touch the page you wrote. We exult in what we master and discover. Instead of using one's energy in a void, against frustrations, in anger against publishers, I use it on the press, type, paper, a source of energy. Solving problems, technical, mechanical problems. Which can be solved.... The press mobilized our energies, and is a delight. At the end of the day you can see your work, weigh it. It is done. It exists.... Typesetting is like film cutting. The discipline of typesetting and printing is good for the writer."

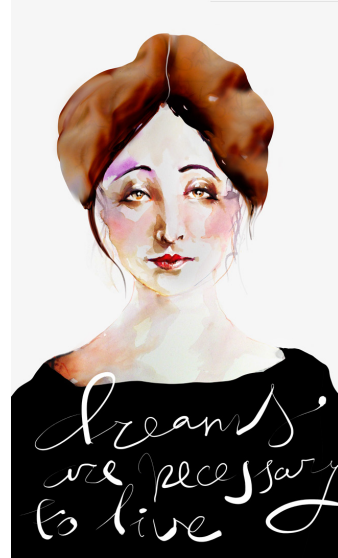
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Nevertheless, at one point in the 1940s, Anaïs, Henry Miller, and some of their literary friends were faced with such a desperate need for money that they began to write erotic and pornographic narratives for an anonymous “collector” for a dollar a page, somewhat as a joke. (It is not clear whether Miller actually wrote these stories or merely allowed his name to be used.)



Anaïs considered the characters in her erotic narratives to be extreme caricatures and never intended the work to be published, but changed her mind in the early 1970s, when she allowed them to be published as *Delta of Venus* and *Little Birds*. In 2016, a previously-undiscovered collection of erotica, *Aulettris*, was published for the first time. The explosion of the feminist movement in the 1960s gave feminist perspectives on Anaïs’s writings, which made her a popular lecturer at various universities.



Many of Anaïs’s friends, including Henry Miller and Otto Rank, tried to convince Anaïs that her obsessive diary writing was destroying her chance at writing the great American novel. However, she decided she had to “go her own way, the woman’s way” and continue her lifelong odyssey of self-exploration and reflection through her diaries. To reconcile fiction and fact, however, Anaïs eventually began rewriting diary entries into her fiction and vice versa.



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In addition to her many lovers, Anaïs eventually had two husbands simultaneously. In 1947, at the age of 44, she met 28-year-old former actor Rupert Pole in a Manhattan elevator on her way to a party. The two ended up dating and traveled to California together. On March 17, 1955, while still married to Hugh, she married Pole at Quartzsite, Arizona, returning with him to live in California.

Hugh remained in New York City and was unaware of Anaïs's second marriage until after her death in 1977—although biographer Deirdre Bair alleges that Hugh knew what was happening while Anaïs was in California, but consciously “chose not to know.”



With Hugh Parker Guiler

Anaïs referred to her simultaneous marriages as her “bicoastal trapeze.” According to Deidre Bair, Anaïs “would set up these elaborate façades in Los Angeles and in New York, but it became so complicated that she had to create something she called the lie box. She had this absolutely enormous purse and in the purse she had two sets of

checkbooks. One said Anaïs Guiler for New York and another said Anaïs Pole for Los Angeles. She had prescription bottles from California doctors and New York doctors with the two different names. And she had a collection of file cards. And she said, ‘I tell so many lies I have to write them down and keep them in the lie box so I can keep them straight.’”

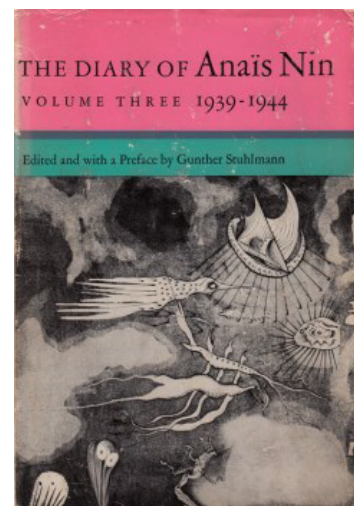
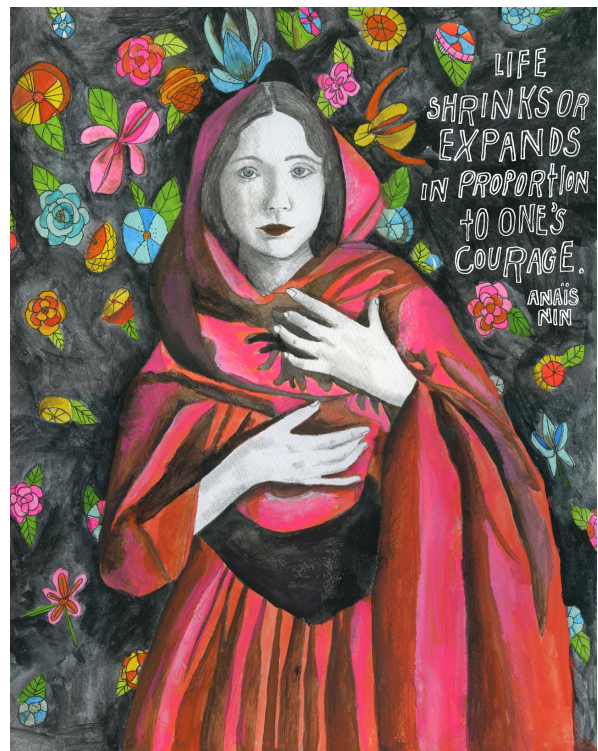
In 1966, Nin had her marriage with Rupert annulled, due to the legal issues arising from both Hugh and Rupert trying to claim her as a dependent on their federal tax returns. Although the marriage was annulled, Anaïs and Rupert continued to live together as if they were married, up until her death in 1977.



With Rupert Pole and friend

According to Barbara Kraft, prior to her death Anaïs wrote to Hugh, asking for his forgiveness. He responded by writing how meaningful his life had been because of her.

On January 14, 1977, sexual to the end, Anaïs Nin died at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles of cervical cancer. □



Thought for the Month

*"The artist is not there to be at one
with the world, he is there to transform
it."*

— Anaïs Nin



PWR Newsletter



*I self-published
my diaries!*



Anaïs Nin

(February 21, 1903 – January 14, 1977)



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