



2015 HAWAII UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES  
ARTS, HUMANITIES, SOCIAL SCIENCES & EDUCATION  
JANUARY 03 - 06, 2015  
ALA MOANA HOTEL, HONOLULU, HAWAII

# AMERICAN AUTHORS IN THE CIVIL WAR

McWILLIAMS, JIM  
DICKINSON STATE UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Dr. Jim McWilliams  
Department of Language and Literature  
Dickinson State University.

### **American Authors in the Civil War**

#### **Synopsis:**

This presentation compares and contrasts the American authors Mark Twain and Ambrose Bierce.

## American Authors in the Civil War: Twain and Bierce

My essay contrasts the experiences of two major American writers in the Civil War: Mark Twain, who deserted from the Confederate army a couple of weeks after the war began, and Ambrose Bierce, who enlisted into the Union army days after the firing on Fort Sumter and then served heroically for nearly its entire duration. Although my approach is primarily biographical, I do some analysis of their literary works to show how their very different experiences were later reflected in their writing. Interestingly enough, for example, both men had strong opinions about Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, though they reached different conclusions: Twain, the Rebel, thought Grant deserved his post-war laurels but Bierce, the Yankee, believed Grant to have unfairly taken credit from others.