

Oates, Joyce Carol (1938-) Encyclopedia Article

Oates, Joyce Carol (1938-)

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Undoubtedly one of the most prolific and versatile authors of the twentieth century, Joyce Carol Oates writes short stories, novels, plays, poetry, screenplays, and essays. She also writes psychological thrillers under the pseudonym Rosamond Smith. Her works have been included numerous times in *The Best American Short Stories*, The O. Henry Awards anthology, The Pushcart Prize anthology, and *The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror*. She won the National Book Award in 1970 for *Them*. Her writing receives continuous critical attention, and she is alternately praised for the quality of her work and criticized for being too prolific, too dark, or too violent. "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been," a story about a teenage girl who is pursued by an older and seemingly dangerous man, is one of the most anthologized stories of the century, earning her a place on most college readings lists and ensuring her continuing influence.

Further Reading:

Johnson, Greg. *Invisible Writer: A Biography of Joyce Carol Oates*. New York, Dutton, 1998.