

Roberts, Nora (1950-) Encyclopedia Article

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Nora Roberts is one of the most prolific novelists of all time, with an output approaching 126 novels with 42 million copies in print as of 1999. A popular writer who specializes in "paperback" romances such as *Carnal Innocence* (1992), *Public Secrets* (1990), and *Born in Shame* (1996), she broke into publishing in 1979 as a 29-year-old housewife who turned to writing to avoid being driven stir crazy by a snowstorm that kept her confined to the house for a week. This house-bound experience played a major role in shaping her research and writing style, which does not depend on first-hand knowledge of the world she writes about. In fact, most of her research is performed on the Internet. "I know they say write what you know," Roberts told a *Publishers Weekly* interviewer in 1998, "but I write about what I want to know." Indeed, her "category romances," as she terms them, rely less on reality and fully fleshed out plots than they do on idealized characters and romanticized settings. She views her works as appealing to readers on an emotional level, evoking the feeling of first love, bitter loss, and quiet romance. "That's what people want to learn about."

Further Reading:

Quinn, Judy. "Nora Roberts: A Celebration of Emotion." *Publishers Weekly*. February 23, 1998, 46.

Tichemer, Louise. "Drive, Discipline, and Desire." *Writer's Digest*. February, 1997, 25.