



The Oxford Book of American Short Stories

Joyce Carol Oates (Editor) , Washington Irving (Contributor) , Jack London (Contributor) , Stephen Crane (Contributor) , Edith Wharton (Contributor) , Willa Cather (Contributor) , Ernest Hemingway (Contributor) , F. Scott Fitzgerald (Contributor) , more... William Carlos Williams (Contributor) , Katherine Anne Porter (Contributor) , Langston Hughes (Contributor) , Flannery O'Connor (Contributor) , Nathaniel Hawthorne (Contributor) , James Baldwin (Contributor) , Ray Bradbury (Contributor) , Eudora Welty (Contributor) , Isaac Bashevis Singer (Contributor) , Bernard Malamud (Contributor) , Saul Bellow (Contributor) , John Cheever (Contributor) , Ursula K. Le Guin (Contributor) , John Updike (Contributor) , Raymond Carver (Contributor) , Herman Melville (Contributor) , Edgar Allan Poe (Contributor) , Harriet Beecher Stowe (Contributor) , Mark Twain (Contributor) , Kate Chopin (Contributor) , Charlotte Perkins Gilman (Contributor) , Henry James (Contributor) ...less

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This volume offers a survey of American short fiction in 59 tales that combine classic works with 'different, unexpected gems', which invite readers to explore a wealth of important pieces by women and minority writers. Authors include: Amy Tan, Alice Adams, David Leavitt and Tim O'Brien.

The Oxford Book of American Short Stories Details

Date : Published September 1st 1994 by Oxford University Press, USA (first published 1992)

ISBN : 9780195092622

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Format : Paperback 768 pages

Genre : Short Stories, Fiction, Anthologies, Classics, Literature



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From Reader Review The Oxford Book of American Short Stories for online ebook

Corey says

A cool (not-so) little anthology, curated by Joyce Carol Oates. I'm not gonna give it a star-rating, because I never know how to rate anthologies, but it's certainly good reading. Oates put together a collection of little-known stories by America's most well-known writers, from Edgar Allan Poe to Junot Diaz. My only real complaint is that Oates made the odd choice of including her own work in the collection, putting her story alongside Hemingway's and Carver's. You have to laugh a little at a stunt like that.

Mary says

A collection that spans almost more than 100 years of American writers and their short stories. I discovered some authors I didn't know and whose work I enjoyed. I reread some old favorites. And, of course, some I didn't care for. I appreciated JCO's introductory biographical and literary analysis comments.

Andrew says

Finally! I began reading this book quite a while ago and am happy to report that I've finished. Overall, I was curious to see the evolution of short story writing in America from its dawning to the late 1980's. I have to admit, I didn't begin to enjoy the stories until I read the ones that came after the Civil War. The stories I thought were most exceptional--in voice, in language, in characterization--were written during or after the Harlem Renaissance. These stories include:

"Heat" by Joyce Carol Oates
"Where Is the Voice Coming From?" by Eudora Welty
"Sonny's Blues" by James Baldwin
"My Son the Murderer" by Bernard Malamud
"Battle Royal" by Ralph Ellison
"Something to Remember Me By" by Saul Bellow
"Hunters in the Snow" by Tobias Wolff
"The Girl with the Pimply Face" by William Carlos Williams
"Red-Headed Baby" by Langston Hughes
"A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" by Ernest Hemingway

Fallen says

There will always be standards and staples we're told are divine, definitive, or otherwise distinct in the realms of genre or generation. Often, they're substantively applauded or admonished; but it is the institution or branding which propel them into the public eye and therefore, public opinion. They're widely read or recommended so, one might assume acculturation. Even if something is terrible, you're expected to know of

and about it. Likewise, if it's amazing. I can say *The Oxford Book of American Short Stories* is **not** of the latter.

The prose reads as pretentious because every narrative is less forthright than flagrant. Characters are glib and singular with little, if any critical consideration; which wouldn't be a nuisance if it weren't for the absence of catharsis. This applies in tale after tale. Moreover, the "big names" of its constituents contrive it that much more as a vanity project. The "distinctions" of this book are unsurprising given those involved, since each writer (notably, the editor) bring brands which are bolstered under the banner of *Oxford*.

If one is inclined to conform to the power of suggestion, I recommend reading library copies so as to engage with whatever references may arise at literary parties where one may also be inclined to gulp at goblets and munch on artisan cheese. I would describe specific segments, but they all [equally] left me utterly unmoved. There is nothing particularly noteworthy about this collection other than its testament to commodity fetishism, where mediocrity may be mantled.

Alyssa says

an anthology of "canon" literature full of over-read, over-analyzed short stories. needed it for a college course.

Wendy says

If you like short stories, there are plenty to enjoy in this book.

Lindsey says

Just read Willa Cather's A Death in the Desert. I love the way that woman writes!!

6-2-2011

I'm going to keep a list of the short stories I read before this anthology goes back to the library (I'm sure I won't have time to read it cover-to-cover).

Rip van Winkle, by Washington Irving

Peter Rugg, the Missing Man, by William Austin

The Wives of the Dead, by Nathaniel Hawthorne

The Tell-Tale Heart, by Edgar Allan Poe

The Ghost in the Mill, by Harriet Beecher Stowe

A White Heron, by Sarah Orne Jewett

The Storm, by Kate Chopin --Ugh! Not my cup of tea.

A Death in the Desert, by Willa Cather

A Late Encounter with the Enemy, by Flannery O'Connor --This one had me laugh out loud a couple times!

There Will Come Soft Rains, by Ray Bradbury

The Sheriff's Children, by Charles Chesnutt

The Yellow Wallpaper, by Charlotte Perkins Gilman

I'll have to check this anthology out from the library again sometime. I enjoyed what I was able to read in the time I borrowed it.

Chelsea says

As a short story collection this anthology contains a wide variety of authors with a quick comprehensive overview of each author included. Throughout this entire anthology I was annoyed however because Dates in her forward explicitly said she hand-picked works which weren't the authors best known pieces and then not only began with the most known Poe but in her snippets about the author on more than a fourth of them said this piece is this authors best know or most reprinted. That wouldn't have bothered me if she hadn't also said she was not going to print those and instead look for more less known representations of the author's works. If you're looking for a comprehensive short story collection containing American authors this is your book, if you want to find more obscure printings of the well known American authors you will need to look elsewhere.

Barbara says

Great selection of stories and interesting introductions by Joyce Carol Oates.

Haley says

Most of the stories were good but some got on the boring side

Kim Daly says

There's a typo in Sarah Orne Jewett's 'A White Heron', on page 124, 6 lines from the bottom. It reads 'towards' instead of 'towered'. Therefore do not use this edition to quote this passage.

BarbaraW says

Great read. Found at a yard sale. Lots of great authors and works. Helps you go deeper into the writings of the ones you like. Well put together.

Karina says

I finally did it! I feel incredibly accomplished haha

It's a great collection that introduced me to new (to me) authors and reminded me of some favorites. Really recommend this especially if you've already read a bunch of what's considered the core classics of short stories. This offers alternative stories by some of the most well-known authors that often get overlooked in favor of their most famous works. I really enjoyed my journey through this beast of a book.

Elizabeth says

I
am
finished...

finally.

I read this book over the course of several years in between novels. After teaching American Literature for 5 years a while back, I enjoyed reading a few old favorites, but mostly being exposed to new stuff. Although there were a couple that were hard to get through, most of the stories were great, with standouts from Harriet Beecher Stowe to Louise Erdrich.

Steve says

An excellent collection of American short fiction. Runs the gamut from the earliest to very recent stories and an excellent job of choosing the material.
