



# The Oxford Book of Modern Women's Stories

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## The Oxford Book of Modern Women's Stories From Oxford University Press

"The inadequate acknowledgement of women short story writers in standard anthologies is a cause for wonder or affront. How else, indeed, can you view it, given the riches overlooked?" So states editor Patricia Craig in her introduction to *The Oxford Book of Modern Women's Stories*, a rich, wide-ranging collection that, at last, redresses this historical imbalance by bringing together forty examples of the very best women's stories--from established authors such as Edith Wharton, Virginia Woolf, Eudora Welty, and Katherine Mansfield, to such modern masters as Margaret Atwood, Alice Munro, Bharati Mukherjee, and Amy Tan.

Here readers will find humor, passion, eccentricity, forcefulness, elan, intellectual vigor, subversion--indeed every shading of tone and mood, from ironic detachment to full-blooded engagement. Each writer has her own, perfectly realized angle of vision, whether it's the zestfulness of Angela Carter, the breathtaking evocations of Willa Cather, the quirkiness of Grace Paley, or the pungency of Flannery O'Connor.

Breaking with tradition, editor Patricia Craig offers few stories about traditional "women's" topics. Instead, the entries in this collection range from an unforgettable tale of racism in South Africa to explorations of adultery, immigration, the importance of cultural identity, and the rootlessness of American cities. Craig also includes some provocative offerings from outside the mainstream of twentieth century fiction--a ghost story by Edith Wharton, a delightful fairy tale, and several engaging historical pieces.

Eloquent and captivating, *The Oxford Book of Modern Women's Stories* offers a dazzling assortment of classic stories and overlooked gems that will amuse, intrigue, and challenge every lover of fine fiction.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

British editor Craig aims here to "indicate in a single volume the extent of women's contributions to the short story form." While no such summing up seems possible, this excellent book goes a long way toward reaching her goal. Beginning with Willa Cather's classic "Paul's Case" (1905) and ranging through the 1990s, these 40 selections confirm the literary brilliance of many of their creators and, at the least, the deftness of craft of others. Stars of the collection are Alice Munro's highly charged re-creation of a woman's life in "Meneseteung"; Nadine Gordimer's 1956 story, the daringly candid, still timely "Which New Era Would That Be?"; "First Love" a darkly luminous tale from Eudora Welty; the deliciously witty, superbly crafted "The Rehabilitation of Ginevra Leake," by Hortense Calisher; the earthy, vigorous "An Interest in Life," by Grace Paley. More memoir than fiction, Mary McCarthy's "Yonder Peasant, Who Is He?" makes the heart quake; Flannery O'Connor's familiar "Good Country People" packs a wallop no matter how many times one has read it; Cynthia Ozick's "The Butterfly and the Traffic Light" gleams with stunning aperçus. Margaret Atwood addresses the irony of youthful dreams in "Hair Jewellery," and Joyce Carol Oates's trademark erotic violence distinguishes "Scene of Passion and Despair." A clutch of typically British stories by Jane Gardam, Stevie Smith, Angela Carter and F.M. Mayor may be a bit less appealing to American readers, but Katherine Mansfield's "Je ne parle pas français" remains riveting and Fay Weldon's sardonic "In the Great War" is the last word on women's lib. Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Bharati Mukherjee and Anjana Appachana limn pictures of their compatriots at home and as emigrants to other shores; Edna O'Brien evokes rural Ireland; and a chapter from Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* offers a Chinese-American woman's view of the world, rounding out a splendid collection.

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From [Booklist](#)

Mystified by the apparent disregard for women writers in standard anthologies, and in an attempt to correct this oversight, editor Patricia Craig has compiled a lavish, diverse collection of stories by bringing together 40 of the best examples of the genre. Included are works by the likes of Edith Wharton, Virginia Woolf, and Eudora Welty, as well as works by more contemporary writers such as Margaret Atwood, Alice Munro, and Amy Tan. Attempting to stay away from so-called women's topics, Craig has chosen stories that offer humor, pathos, eccentricity, mystery, intrigue, absurdity, and tragedy, all the while dealing with an assortment of modern predicaments. "Afterward," by Edith Wharton, is an elegant, chilling ghost story; Nadine Gordimer's "Which New Era Would That Be?" is an account of racism in South Africa; and Christina Stead delivers a brief narrative reflecting pre-McCarthy era political and social idealism in "UNO 1945." "The Day Mr. Prescott Died," by Sylvia Plath, is an earthy, realistic look at the death of a neighbor; while "Irish Revel," by Edna O'Brien, is a lighthearted look at a shy, young Irish girl's first party. In uniting these equally strong yet incredibly diverse voices, Craig has achieved an exquisite balance between social, political, and sexual themes that allows each writer a strong, individual voice. This book is a stunning achievement that will linger in the mind of the reader long after the last story is read. *Kathleen Hughes*

Review

'fulfills the something-for-everyone ideal ... Editor Patricia Craig has assembled a twentieth century goody bag ... absorbing anthology.'

Carolyn Hitt, *Western Mail*

'she has brought together work from some of the finest women's writers of the century ... anyone wanting to

get a real grounding in women's fiction would need to read them all - a far from unpleasant task whether you are a feminist or not'

Madeleine Burton, Hitchin Gazette

'Pat Craig has brought together 40 stories of the highest quality and appeal from many of this century's best women writers. This is a highly-enjoyable collection, chronicling a century's worth of women's short story writing in all its richness. Throughout, the emphasis lies firmly, as indeed

it should, on the quality of the writing, rather than on the fact that these stories were all written by women.'

Lucy Hallam, Yorkshire Post

'varied and exciting read ... She has structured the stories cleverly ... If you want a series of refreshing reads, this book is a good birthday present.'

Michelene Wandor, Hampstead and Highgate Express

'a dazzling collection of stories by 40 of this century's best women writers ... there are treats here to suit all tastes'

Diana Orton, Home and Country, January 1995

'door-stopping ... its purpose is simply to redress the gender imbalance in most short story collections ...

Here, the quality of writing does excuse arbitrary selection.'

Andy Beckett, The Independent on Sunday

'The power of these stories is awesome; each stands out, singular and strong, framed by its neighbours yet not falling into its shadow.'

The Irish Times

'some of the best of women's writing in one collection ... Humour, passion, subversion, hope, despair - all human life is there.'

Grania McFadden, Belfast Telegraph

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### Tamera Duckett:

As people who live in the actual modest era should be change about what going on or info even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era that is certainly always change and progress. Some of you maybe will certainly update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to anyone is you don't know what kind you should start with. This The Oxford Book of Modern Women's Stories is our recommendation to make you keep up with the world. Why, because book serves what you want and wish in this era.

#### Sylvia Silva:

Reading a publication tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With studying you can get a lot of information that could give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world can easily share their idea. Ebooks can also inspire a lot of people. Many author can inspire all their reader with their story or even

their experience. Not only the storyline that share in the guides. But also they write about the knowledge about something that you need instance. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach children, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors in this world always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some analysis before they write to the book. One of them is this The Oxford Book of Modern Women's Stories.

**John Tovar:**

Exactly why? Because this The Oxford Book of Modern Women's Stories is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap it but latter it will distress you with the secret it inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who else write the book in such wonderful way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining approach but still convey the meaning thoroughly. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this any longer or you going to regret it. This unique book will give you a lot of benefits than the other book have such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking means. So , still want to hesitate having that book? If I were you I will go to the e-book store hurriedly.

**Shameka Smith:**

A number of people said that they feel uninterested when they reading a reserve. They are directly felt the idea when they get a half parts of the book. You can choose typically the book The Oxford Book of Modern Women's Stories to make your reading is interesting. Your own personal skill of reading proficiency is developing when you such as reading. Try to choose simple book to make you enjoy to study it and mingle the sensation about book and examining especially. It is to be initial opinion for you to like to open up a book and go through it. Beside that the e-book The Oxford Book of Modern Women's Stories can to be your friend when you're sense alone and confuse using what must you're doing of that time.

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