



# The Short Story Cycle: A Genre Companion and Reference Guide

*Susan Mann*

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This guide is an excellent beginning for the study of a little-recognized genre and will be needed by all academic libraries. *Choice*

During the 1970s many distinguished writers began experimenting with the short story cycle, a literary form that achieved prominence in the early decades of the century through such works as James Joyce's *Dubliners* and Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*. Despite the growing interest of both writers and readers, no theoretical work has been done on this genre in the past ten years. *The Short Story Cycle* provides a wide-ranging survey of the subject, offering detailed analyses of nine classic short story cycles and an annotated listing of over 120 others, many by contemporary authors. In addition, the introduction includes a history of the genre and its related forms as well as a discussion of conventions associated with the cycle.

Short story cycles by Joyce, Anderson, Hemingway, Steinbeck, Faulkner, Welty, O'Connor, and Updike are described in individual chapters. These works illustrate the genre's diversity and vitality, ranging from cycles that are explicitly related through chronology, plot, and character to collections that reveal subtler, implicit unities. The author looks at the ways different writers use repeated or developed characters, themes, myth, imagery, setting, point of view, and plot or chronology to create the sense of a larger whole. Chapter bibliographies supply information on relevant critical writings as well as biographical and autobiographical materials. The volume concludes with an annotated listing of important twentieth-century short-story cycles by American, British, European, Canadian, Australian, Polish, Soviet, and Latin American writers.

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