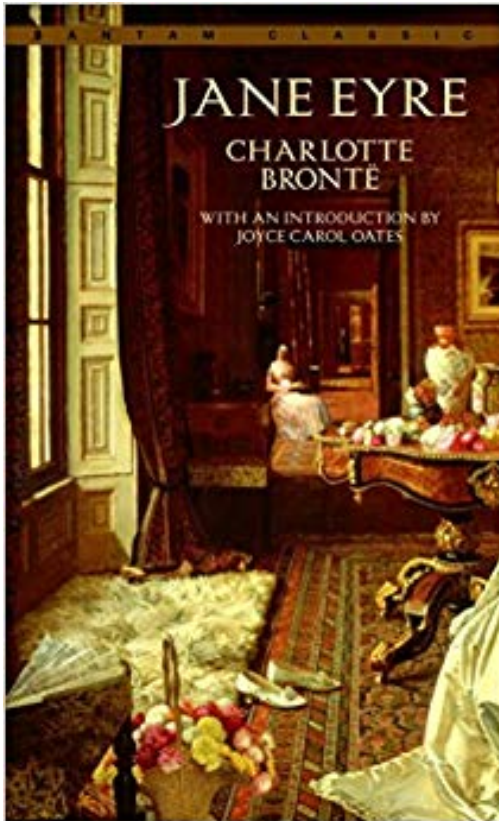


Jane Eyre (Bantam Classics) by Charlotte Bronte



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Introduction by Joyce Carol Oates • Nominated as one of America's best-loved novels by PBS's *The Great American Read* Initially published under the pseudonym Currer Bell in 1847, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* erupted onto the English literary scene, immediately winning the devotion of many of the world's most renowned writers, including William Makepeace Thackeray, who declared it a work "of great genius." Widely regarded as a revolutionary novel, Brontë's masterpiece introduced the world to a radical new type of heroine, one whose defiant virtue and moral courage departed sharply from the more acquiescent and malleable female characters of the day. Passionate, dramatic, and surprisingly modern, *Jane Eyre* endures as one of the world's most beloved novels.



Reviews of the Jane Eyre (Bantam Classics) by Charlotte Bronte

Togor

A timeless classic. I read this book a long time ago and decided to read it again. Enjoyed it even more as a more mature women. :-) It's a sad story that makes you feel sorry for many of the

characters but it's a good escape back to a time and place so different from where we are now.

Peras

There is something about this book that draws you in even though most of the characters are self-centered and malicious and you tend not to like them. The current of love, lust, and possession runs throughout the story which is told to the new renter of "The Grange" by the housekeeper of Wuthering Heights. As she sits and knits she spins the tale of the tempestuous love story of Cathy and Heathcliff, slowly but surely you are pulled in to all the machinations that the Lintons and Earnshaws and the orphan Heathcliff engage in across the cold, damp, windswept moors of the Yorkshire estate. Your mind becomes filled with Heathcliff, always Heathcliff, watching planning and deeply in love with Cathy. The story follows their lives through two generations.

As a reader, I have to wonder what state of mind Emily Bronte was in when she wrote the turbulent tale. Published in 1847 the story was considered lurid and shocking, but a masterpiece. It is Bronte's only novel and is as relevant today as it was back then. Emily Bronte had been ill for some time and died in December of 1848.

Nirad

I enjoyed the book. I was surprised how our modern-day language has, apparently, been dumbed down over the years. I'm college-educated, but found many words she used to be ones I had never heard. That said, I still enjoyed the book. I probably should have read it years ago in some English class, but it was never required. I took my time with no looming deadlines and enjoyed it.

Agrainel

I have Weiland's other books, "Outlining Your Novel" and "Structuring Your Novel", so when I had the chance to pre-order this, it was like, "Shut up and take my money!" :-). I was not disappointed.

It's the unabridged text of Jane Eyre, so you could read the novel and ignore the annotations (but why would you of course!). But it's like having Weiland there with you, telling you how you can apply Bronte's writing genius to your own novel. This is the first annotated anything that I've seen that tells you where Plot Point One, etc. is. My professors can't tell me that. (I've asked!)

So this is not annotated like the classics usually are. There is nothing in it about the times in which the author lived, or what a governess of this time period would experience. You already know that, you've read Jane Eyre, probably in school. This is a classic novel with instruction and encouragement on how to create your own classic novel, whatever your novel is about. It's worth the price of admission, even if you are a dude and don't care about Jane Eyre. You could just read the annotations and text examples and learn.

I pre-ordered the Dracula one. I can't wait.

Now about Jane Eyre. This was the first time I'd read it and I was impressed. It's a classic for a reason. I just have two comments about it:

- 1) I'm pretty sure Mr. Rochester could have gotten an annulment.
- 2) WTF was up with St. John Rivers? I felt that that part was way too long and I wanted to strangle him after he wouldn't take no for an answer the first time he asked her to marry him. I wanted her refusal to be as solid with him as it was with Mr. Rochester. Girl, you deserve so much better! But I digress...

Whitegrove

This old classic is a classic for a reason. IF I read it in high school I don't remember it. So I enjoyed a delightful read over several days, savouring the descriptions, enjoying the character development as well as the plot. At first I thought it was a children's book, but after reading it, I think the children of today would have a hard time understanding many of the beautiful uses of the English language that Charlotte Bronte perfected.

Riplot

There are two reviews here, since this special version of the book has two things going on. When I was a kid I had some weird built-in prejudice against anything labeled "classic". Unknowingly I read "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn" and even Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar," but I thought I had "discovered" them--had anyone told me they were classics, I wouldn't have read them. Stupid, but true. When I was in my thirties I read "A Tale of Two Cities" and re-thought my whole position on the classics--maybe there was a reason they were called that. So I read a lot of them, but I never read "Jane Eyre." I saw about four different movie versions of it, though, and figured I knew the story well enough. But when *Writer's Digest* announced this version, I saw a chance to correct an omission AND get some good writing advice. KM Weiland's book on structure, after all, is a masterpiece. Hence, this double-edged review.

1. Jane Eyre. The movie versions I've seen were, surprisingly, fairly true to the book (not often the case, as anyone who reads a book and then watches its movie knows). Shy governess, obnoxious-but-philosophical middle aged guy. Crazy wife in the attic. Missionaries. They hit all the high points. But Bronte's prose is well-done, and her characters are far more complex than the movies. She has a great way of building suspense, too. Even though I knew what was going to happen, I wanted to see it happen, so I kept reading. And I was satisfied when I closed the book: a good story, well-told.

2. The notes. Weiland's notes are, at the risk of sounding sycophantic, brilliant. Remember, these notes are about the writing of the book, not about the historicity or any of the other kinds of analysis you'd usually see in annotations. (My annotated "Sense and Sensibility" practically explains each curtsy as well as why dances lasted half an hour.) There's plenty of analysis, but it's all about how Bronte tells the story. For readers of Weiland's "Structuring Your Novel," it's like a Part II, showing the First Plot Point (p118), Midpoint (p216), Third Plot Point (p325), Resolution and Epilogue. There are even pages at the back with questions (and lines for answering them or writing other notes) about structure. But wait, there's more! There are notes on perspective, voice, POV, conflict and tension, obstacles, character development, transitions, and way more than that. (I'm laundry listing here--but trust me, the notes could practically be their own book.)

I'm a writer myself, though you won't see my name in Amazon in that capacity--I ghost write. Under my own name, I'm also a freelance editor (developmental, substantive, and copy--you name it, I do it) and have been one for years. But I still read books on writing all the time. Some I love, some I tolerate, and a few I've ridiculed (after jumping up and down on their tattered remains). But this book is its own category, or perhaps it defies category. It's a writing master class, analyzing a masterpiece of English literature to make its key points. If I were a writing teacher, this would be required reading for my classroom.

One thing alone keeps the book from getting the fifth star, and it's a mechanical thing, nothing against Bronte or Weiland. They did their jobs well! But the typeface for the story is a serif font, and it's ten points at most, maybe eight. I needed to buy a +2 set of "cheaters" to read the story alone--and the notes are worse. They're a pale blue sans serif (the contrasting serif/sans serif fonts are good; the size is not and the pale color is not) that was hard to read even with the +2 cheaters. The notes are in the outer margins and take up about a third (one column) of each page. I wish they'd gone for broke and instead of giving us a six-by-nine (I'm eyeballing it, so the measurements are probably not exact), gone up a couple of sizes, just for the sake of those of us who are over 40. Then maybe they could've made the print a decent size.

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