

## NOSTALGIA IN JOHN CHEEVER'S *THE HOUSEBREAKER OF SHADY HILL* AND OTHER STORIES

Marko Mitić  
University of Niš, Niš  
30markom@gmail.com

Ana Kocić Stanković  
University of Niš, Niš  
anakocic@hotmail.com

The paper deals with the notion and function of nostalgia in John Cheever's short story cycle *The Housebreaker of Shady Hill and Other Stories* (1958). The analysis relies on Svetlana Boym's definition of nostalgia as "a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed" (2001: xiii) and on Jennifer Smith's (2017) study of nostalgia in the American short story cycle. The objective is to examine how and for what purposes Cheever's cycle employs nostalgia in individual stories, and to show whether different evocations of nostalgia present partial or false versions of the past. Having in mind the recursive and accretive nature of the cycle as a genre, the authors intend to examine how individual stories come together to render a more collective sense of nostalgia, whether coherent or ambivalent, that might be in a correlation with a specific middle-class suburban locality of the American Northeast.

**Keywords:** nostalgia, John Cheever, the short story cycle, American literature, *The Housebreaker of Shady Hill and Other Stories*

## НОСТАЛГИЈАТА ВО *THE HOUSEBREAKER OF SHADY HILL* AND OTHER STORIES

Марко Митиќ  
Универзитет во Ниш, Ниш  
30markom@gmail.com

Ана Коциќ Станковиќ  
Универзитет во Ниш, Ниш  
anakocic@hotmail.com

Оваа статија се занимава со поимот и функцијата на носталгијата во циклусот раскази *The Housebreaker of Shady Hill and Other Stories* (1958) од Џон Чивер. Анализата се потпира врз дефиницијата за носталгијата на Светлана Бојм, според која носталгијата е „копнеж по домот што повеќе не постои или никогаш не постоел (2001: xiii), како и врз студијата за носталгијата од Џенифер Смит (2017) во американската збирка раскази. Целта е да се истражи како и со која цел циклусот на Чивер вклучува носталгија во индивидуалните приказни и да се покаже дали различните евокации на носталгијата претставуваат делумни или погрешни верзии на минатото. Имајќи предвид дека циклусот раскази како жанр по природа содржи повторувања и надополнувања, авторите имаат намера да истражат како поединечните раскази се поврзуваат за да дадат поколективно чувство на носталгија, без разлика дали е тоа кохерентно или амбивалентно, кое може да биде во корелација со специфичниот локалитет на предградието во кое живее средната класа на американскиот североисток.

**Клучни зборови:** носталгија, Џон Чивер, циклус раскази, американска книжевност, *The Housebreaker of Shady Hill and Other Stories*

## 1 Introduction

John Cheever (1912-1982), the renowned American author of short stories and novels, nicknamed “the Chekhov of the suburbs” (Chilton 2015) often explored the lives, places, desires and aspirations of the suburban middle class of the American Northeast in his fiction. Moreover, many of Cheever’s stories feature a strong sense of nostalgia that is tightly associated with the suburbs of the American East. The search for nostalgia is sometimes so intense in his stories that Burton Kendle (1982: 219) uses the term “passion of nostalgia” to describe what many of Cheever’s characters experience and desire. The main focus of the paper<sup>1</sup> is the treatment and employment of nostalgia in John Cheever’s short story cycle *The Housebreaker of Shady Hill and Other Stories* (1958). Another aim is to show whether different evocations of nostalgia in these stories present true, partial or false versions of the past as well as their influence on the characters’ present or future.

The first part of the paper aims to develop a theoretical framework by defining nostalgia as a concept, the short story cycle as a genre, and the connection between them. First, the paper relies on Svetlana Boym’s influential study of nostalgia where she defines it and analyzes it in detail. Then, Jennifer Smith’s concept of critical nostalgia as a frequent narrative strategy in many American short story cycles is presented. Smith’s analysis of how short story cycles employ nostalgia as a mode of expression that simultaneously shows the power of nostalgia and criticizes it serves as a valuable tool for the paper’s examination of Cheever’s cycle.

The main part of the paper presents the analyses of individual stories in the cycle. Thus, the focus is on when and why nostalgia arises, objects on which it concentrates, and the functions it fulfills. In addition, special attention is paid to how nostalgia treats the past and whether it selects certain parts of it or falsifies it. Simultaneously, the analysis identifies potential similarities and differences in terms of how these stories employ nostalgia. Finally, the stories are examined as parts of the whole, where the aim is to understand how the interdependence of the stories helps construct an image of collective nostalgia that captures desires and aspirations of the whole community.

## 2 Defining Nostalgia

In her influential study, Svetlana Boym defines nostalgia as “a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed” (2001: xiii). Thus, the first characteristic of nostalgia is that it focuses on an object that is permanently lost or illusory. Moreover, the object of nostalgia is often vague and difficult to define. The fact that nostalgics find it difficult to say what exactly they yearn for points to the notoriously elusive nature of nostalgia (Boym 2001: xiv). Besides being elusive, objects of nostalgia are frequently idealized, impersonal, and unattainable (Santesso 2006: 16). Secondly, nostalgia usually points to a particular place or time, but it is mostly

---

<sup>1</sup> A shorter version of this paper was presented at the 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference on English Language and Anglophone Literatures Today (ELALT 6), organized by the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Serbia, in October, 2022.

preoccupied with time. As Aaron Santesso (2006: 15) explains, nostalgia is more often imagined in temporal terms than in the spatial or geographical terms. In its focus on a different time, nostalgia is not a simple and truthful recollection of the past but a deeply subjective and therefore unreliable and distorted reconstruction of it. Moreover, nostalgia is not exclusively focused on the past but it forms a complex relationship with the present and future as well. As Boym explains, “to look back nostalgically is not to recall the past as it really was, but to elide, distort, and occlude its realities in the light of what has happened since” (2001: xiii). Therefore, nostalgia is a “mode of idealization responding first and foremost to the concerns of the present” (Santesso 2006: 13). In other words, the past in nostalgic longing is frequently, if not always, determined by the needs and desires of the present.

Nostalgia merges desires of the present and components of the past, real or imagined, which are rearranged and distorted to fit those desires. This process of partial blending is what Boym calls “a superimposition of two images” (2001: xiii), where notions of home and abroad, past and present, and dream and everyday life are overlaid, but never fully fused into a single image. As nostalgia often arises in times of need, it often serves as a defense against the experience of loss and displacement, which means that nostalgia can be both retrospective and prospective. It is prospective when “fantasies of the past determined by needs of the present have a direct impact on realities of the future” (Boym 2001: xvi). This means that nostalgic recollections of the past may serve as a foundation on which a better future could be built.

Notably, nostalgia is not just a personal sentiment of an individual but it can also be a collective mechanism that aims to correct the memory of the past and the needs of the present of a whole community or a nation. Examined broadly, nostalgia can be seen as a historical phenomenon “that arises in response to a set of specific cultural, political, and economic forces” (Su 2005: 4). Thus, nostalgic yearning for lost or imagined time periods or places aims to pose an alternative to the present social, political or domestic relations that fail to fulfill human needs. Nostalgia could also be considered a rebellion against the modern idea of time and progress as it tends to negate historical change in order to suspend the flow of time, sometimes even confusing the actual with the imaginary (Boym 2001: xv). Therefore, nostalgia is both a personal and collective yearning for a lost time or place that arises to fulfill the needs and desires of the present. As it offers an idealized or even entirely imagined vision of the past, a nostalgic view may represent a distorted, selective and fuzzy picture of the past. As a collective phenomenon, nostalgia aims to fight against the irreversibility of time and progress, and to fulfill human needs in the present social, political and domestic contexts.

## **2.1 American Short Fiction and Nostalgia**

Explorations of nostalgia can frequently be observed in many American short story cycles. In her wide discussion of the form, Smith (2017: 22) uses the term “critical nostalgia” to refer to how cycles, especially those linked by locality, often simultaneously employ nostalgia as a sincere mode of expression that creates a wistful simplification of the past, and as a mode of expression that criticizes

that very same simplification or sentimentality. Thus, short story cycles<sup>2</sup> deploy a self-conscious sentimentality in the sense that these texts both embrace nostalgia and criticize it. Many texts belonging to this genre expose how nostalgia often masks and contradicts past injustices, relationships, and homes, while also acknowledging how nostalgia seeks to restore and correct them. Likewise, cycles often criticize the numbing effects of nostalgia because the characters escape the necessary effort of reshaping the present. Ultimately, nostalgia proves to be both powerful and unsatisfying as characters feel a deep nostalgia for a near past that was never very good to begin with.

As cycles often deal with community or collective experience, their employment of nostalgia serves two purposes. First, the language of nostalgia establishes a narrative mode that reacts to the very conditions of modernity such as progress, change, irreversibility of time, fragmentation, or alienation (Smith 2017: 22). Secondly, nostalgia serves as a defense of a depicted locality against the wounds caused by modernity. Because of the genre's frequent focus on a community or limited locality, its loose form allows the authors to dramatize multiple responses to the changes within communities, rather than offering a conclusive statement. American short story cycles often show how nostalgia corrects the past and the present while simultaneously exposing its tendency to distort, obscure, or idealize the past. Considered broadly, cycles are able to explore how nostalgia operates on a collective level, or how it points to multiple and varied responses of a whole community.

### 3 John Cheever's Short Fiction and Nostalgia

Nostalgia in Cheever's short stories usually focuses on the illusory sanctuary of family goodness and love, the return to the original suburban or coastal setting of remembered happiness which promises a renewal of the former good life (Kendle 1982: 221-223). Essentially, these yearnings embody a middle-class desire as they express the urgency to regain or establish the good life symbolized by suburban living. What unifies the rich and varied world of Cheever's fiction is "the passionate attempt to retain and foster an image of an innocent past" (Kendle 1982: 219). Significantly, nostalgia of Cheever's characters is selective and it suppresses elements from the past, public or private, that might threaten their idylls (Kendle 1982: 226). Rupp (1982: 232) even claims that Cheever wrote his stories for readers who are nostalgic for the better time and place that never was.

#### 3.1 *The Housebreaker of Shady Hill and Other Stories*

*The Housebreaker of Shady Hill and Other Stories* consists of seven stories set in the suburb of Shady Hill near New York City. The stories ("O Youth and Beauty!", "The Sorrows of Gin", "The Five-Forty-Eight", "The Country Husband", "The Housebreaker of Shady Hill", "The Worm in the Apple", "Just Tell Me Who It Was", "The Trouble of Marcy Flint") were originally published in the *New Yorker*

<sup>2</sup> Forrest Ingram was the first to define the short story cycle as "a book of short stories so linked by their author that the reader's successive experience on various levels of the pattern of the whole significantly modifies his experience of each of its component parts" (1971: 19).

magazine in the period from 1953 to 1957 (Cheever 1978: viii). Many of the stories in this cycle deal explicitly with nostalgia, while others only briefly feature nostalgic images that gain wider significance when the stories are taken as a whole. The stories work together to dramatize a rich and complex nature of nostalgia, and to simultaneously criticize it as something that distorts and occludes the past, or something that arrests development and change. Likewise, many of the stories reveal how nostalgia functions on both personal and collective levels, pointing to similar images and effects. Finally, nostalgia, as a thematic element, serves as one of the unifying patterns that binds the stories together.

Several of the stories in this cycle explore how nostalgia arises from a specific need in the present, and how, in search of its fitting object, it aims to correct the problems of the present. Many protagonists in these stories experience the loss of innocence, youth and beauty, or face financial or marital issues, or deal with various threats to their suburban family life. In one way or another, these characters struggle to recreate the happiness of the past, while also registering that the past was far from ideal. Additionally, nostalgia turns out to be prospective for some characters as they try to build a better future while for others it becomes an act of simple retrospection or even destruction.

Apart from employing the same setting, recurring characters, motifs and themes, Cheever's short story cycle employs nostalgia as an additional unifying pattern. The unifying patterns frequently deployed by short story cycles are repeated and developed characters, themes or ideas, imagery, setting, plot, chronological order, and point of view (Mann 1989: xii). The pervasiveness of nostalgia in the majority of the stories contributes to the overall unity in the book. The stories themselves are self-contained units but the way they show the same thematic interest in nostalgia or a lack of it contributes to the creation of interdependence among them. As independent stories, they either explore a certain aspect of nostalgia or merely touch upon it. However, observed as a whole, these stories complement each other and build a fuller and more cohesive meaning than individual stories. This is in line with James Nagel's claim that each story or a component of the cycle "must stand alone yet be enriched in the context of the interrelated stories" (2001: 15).

The use of different protagonists, perspectives and plots enables Cheever to render a detailed and complex image of nostalgia as both a personal and a collective phenomenon. The loose form of the cycle proves to be suitable for the exploration and dramatization of nostalgia as something that can be destructive, retrospective or prospective. Likewise, the fact that nostalgia occludes, distorts, idealizes or invents the past is reinforced by the repetition of the same pattern in most of the stories. Thus, the cycle dramatizes how nostalgia arises out of different needs and how it fulfills different functions, but it also shows the tendency of nostalgia to treat the past in a similar manner. Moreover, the employment of different characters leads to the development of a collective experience of nostalgia. When different pieces of nostalgic renderings of the past are put together, it becomes evident that what these characters strive for is an idealized version of a middle-class suburban life. John Cheever is able to portray different visions and perspectives of nostalgia, but he also constructs a wider, richer and more complex image of it.

### 3.2 Nostalgia in *The Housebreaker of Shady Hill and Other Stories*

The opening story of the book, "The Housebreaker of Shady Hill," dramatizes the dynamics of nostalgia in detail. The main protagonist, Johnny Hake, troubled by his financial problems, loses his personal sense of innocence when he steals a neighbor's wallet. Even before the aforementioned theft, Hake's loss of job and money troubles are described as sense of yearning for something that he cannot define yet. Thinking about the troubled relationship with his mother which negatively affects his present marital happiness, Hake vividly describes his desire to imagine things as they could have been by exclaiming that he wants to do it all over again "in some emotional Arcadia, and have us both behave differently, so that I could think of her at three in the morning without guilt" (Cheever 1978: 257). At this point, the object of Hake's nostalgia is vague as he himself acknowledges that he has been "homesick for countries" (1978: 257) he has never seen. Johnny is able to dissect his own need for nostalgic longing and shows capacity for self-reflection and analysis. He already understands that he needs nostalgia at this particular moment and shows awareness that his homesickness points to purely imagined things.

Significantly, Hake's yearning for financial security comes hand in hand with his nostalgic yearning for the past or purely imaginary places. Hake describes those two yearnings as the same, the only difference being that his desire for money is stronger. Thus, the two urges are almost equated, revealing that Hake's desire for money in the present evokes his nostalgic desire for the past that never was. Eventually, he is unable to substitute his yearning for money for his yearning for an imaginary past, and to go back to a dreamland where everything could be corrected. However, as his sense of guilt and loss of innocence increase, the nostalgia he experiences becomes more powerful and its focus clearer. Shortly after stealing Carl Warburton's wallet, Hake feels a strong nostalgic impulse when he thinks about the long-gone "trout streams" of his youth and other innocent pleasures. Thus, his nostalgia gains its form and function primarily because he wants to return to the state of innocence, and in search for that memory of innocence, he delves deeply into his past that turns out to be unsatisfactory. While thinking about the distant past and the influence of his mother and father on him, Hake discovers that his youth and childhood were far from innocent and happy. His past turns out to be as corrupted as his present vision of reality. Consequently, as the contents of his past do not yield a real Arcadia, Hake's nostalgia has to disregard or to omit all those elements that might ruin the perfect image he desires. Thus, towards the end of the story, Johnny evokes an image from a near past that includes his wife, children, neighbors, and his suburban home that almost miraculously corrects his sense of corruption and immorality. As he explains, that recent past of the suburban life gives him a restored sense of communion, friendship and love that helps him recover both personal innocence and his vision of reality in the present. However, even that recollection is false as the story strongly suggests that love and friendship are not always present in Shady Hill. Nevertheless, Hake's final nostalgic revelation proves to be satisfactory because it enables him to turn towards the future.

If Johnny Hake's nostalgia shows a prospective and restorative potential, the nostalgia of Cash Bentley in "O Youth and Beauty!" is the exact opposite. Cash's

simple yearning for his past glory and youth during his athletic years at college is perhaps motivated by his present problems. As the narrator explains, Cash's present is filled with disappointments, financial worries, and dull family life permeated by constant fighting and quarreling. His re-enactment of his lost youth is symbolically dramatized through the constant imitative repetition of the hurdle race at dinner parties. As Kendle (1982: 225) notes, instead of depending on a specific physical setting, nostalgia sometimes relies on a reversion to the behavior or attitudes reminiscent of an idyllic past. Thus, the protagonist's actions imitate the way nostalgia functions. The damaging effects of this nostalgia are further developed when Cash breaks his leg during one of the races. Unable to run the race for a while, Cash's vision of the present dramatically shifts as he is unable to enjoy the parties and to see his family and friends in a positive light. It becomes evident that his nostalgic reversion serves as a corrective to his vision of the present and points to his inability to accept the change and work hard on reshaping his present. In this case, nostalgia does not have a prospective function since Cash is unable to negotiate between the past and the present, and to transform himself and the relationship with his wife, children and friends. In the end, Cash's wife accidentally shoots and kills him at the moment when he tries to re-enact the hurdle race. What this scene might point to is that Cash's desire for youth, beauty and the past arrests development, change and personal growth, and does not offer any prospective future. Therefore, this story stands as a contrast to the first one despite their similarities, as Johnny Hake's restored vision of innocence and morality enables him to turn to the future, whilst Cash's regressive and destructive flights to the past do not bear fruit in the present.

Somewhat similar to Cash Bentley, "The Country Husband" features a dissatisfied husband, Francis Weed, whose nostalgic impulse almost leads him to destruction. The story itself does not deal with nostalgia explicitly but it shows how buried memory might provoke implicit nostalgic longing that strongly influences actions in the present. After nearly escaping death in a plane crash, Francis finds himself back into a family life of blandness, lack of communication and boredom. At a dinner party at his neighbors' house, Francis' deep-hidden memory is rekindled when he sees a new maid from France who was accused of being in romantic relationships with German officers during the WWII. The memory itself is highly erotic and violent, as Francis remembers that the girl's hair was shaved off and she was stripped naked in the streets of France as a punishment. The effects of this memory on Francis are significant since he subsequently becomes attracted to their babysitter Anne Murchison who is a minor. Through the narrator's description of Anne, it becomes obvious that she represents an image of perfection, youth, beauty and purity for Francis. Later in the story when Francis is tasked with driving Anne home, his conflation of Anne and his past becomes evident and complete. As the narrator explains, "stirred by the grace and beauty of the troubled girl, he seemed, in turning into it, to have come into the deepest past of some submerged memory" (Cheever 1978: 331). For Francis, Anne represents the embodiment of his nostalgic longing for a personal past of beauty, love and innocence. Thus, Anne becomes the object of both Francis' desire and his nostalgia. If nostalgia in "O Youth and Beauty!" relies on a specific pattern of behavior, nostalgia in this story relies on a specific person to recreate the past. Additionally, the focus of Francis' desire and

nostalgia is almost paradoxical. He desires Anne because he craves for long-lost innocence, beauty and purity, but the potential relationship between them is an act of corruption in itself. Thus, Francis' nostalgia negates itself because it tries to fuse two contradictory images. However, unlike Cash Bentley, Francis manages to overcome the destructiveness of nostalgia through sheer discipline and repression.

The way Cheever's cycle often points to the regressive, destructive or simply retrospective nature of nostalgia continues in "The Five-Forty-Eight." The story deals with the cycle's established pattern of treating nostalgia only in passing and at the very end of the story. The protagonist, Blake, is forced to deal with a female employee whom he had a brief affair, subsequently firing her and avoiding her calls. In the concluding moments of the story, when the woman, Miss Dent, holds a gun to his head, Blake expresses a deep longing for the past. As the narrator explains, Blake "formed in his mind a conception of a shelter, so light and strange that it seemed to belong to a time of his life that he could not remember" (Cheever 1978: 245). Eventually, he summons a memory of Shady Hill as an idyllic place of past summer nights filled with love, tenderness and friendship. The rather impersonal content of this memory reveals that it is just an illusion, as the story clearly states that Blake is an immoral man who lacks conscience. He constantly quarrels with his wife and cheats on her, expresses hatred towards his son and rudeness towards his neighbors, and, most significantly, exploits and discards another human being. The function of his nostalgia is rather primitive, as its only purpose is to provide a defense in the face of immediate danger. Similar to Cash in "O Youth and Beauty!" Blake's sudden yearning for the past is nothing more than a self-servient and regressive nostalgia. Both men fail to employ nostalgia as a corrective and prospective force that would enable them to strive towards a better future. As Miss Dent leaves Blake symbolically lying in the mud, he shows no regret or capacity for change.

The concluding story of the cycle, "The Trouble of Marcie Flint" gives an in-depth analysis of the complicated and problematic relation between nostalgia as a wishful simplification and the narrative's criticism of it. At the story's opening, the narrator and Marcie's husband Charles contradict each other as they evaluate Shady Hill. Having decided to abandon his wife and children because of Marcie's adultery, Charles describes Shady Hill as a place of corruption, vanity, adultery, meaningless parties, and smugness. As the story progresses, Charles has to negotiate between his desire to leave his home and his nostalgic longing for it. Eventually, Charles manages to find a brief period from his past at home when he was extremely happy. The memory itself is suffused with images of simple housework, swimming pools, an erotic representation of Marcie, and an image of children merrily playing in the garden. Moreover, Charlie remembers that he saw himself when he was his son's age playing in their garden. What he manages to do is to extract an image of the remembered happiness from his childhood and lay it over the previously evoked memory of a happy suburban life. In other words, images from both distant and near past are superimposed to form a satisfying nostalgic vision of happiness which eventually enables Charles to gather the strength, will and courage to save his marriage. Charles' reconstruction of the past happiness is juxtaposed with Marcie's present life in Shady Hill that gradually reveals the vanity and conservatism within the community. The story thus dramatizes the powerful influence of nostalgia and

its ability to create wishful simplifications while simultaneously revealing and criticizing the way it falsifies the past.

What the interdependence of the stories reveals is that many individual characters manifest similar patterns and images in their evocations of nostalgia. Usually, their suburban middle-class lives prove to be unsatisfactory as they struggle with loss and change. As their nostalgia gains its form, it becomes evident that they summon similar images of the past that almost exclusively pertain to Shady Hill. Moreover, their collective nostalgia becomes a weapon against the forces of change, irreversibility of time and development. Nostalgia has a function of resisting the forces of change and development in the community of Shady Hill. What is more, as nostalgia inevitably excludes everything that is undesirable from the perspective of present desires, individual recollections become more and more abstract and impersonal, revealing an ideal version of Shady Hill. This ideal is unspecific and impersonal precisely because the real past is also full of disappointments, corruption and dishonesty. The collective dream of a perfect Shady Hill that arises out of these stories almost loses its specific temporal location and it becomes static and unchanging. Stripped of strict temporality grounded in reality, nostalgia can freely select suitable aspects of the past and present and fuse them into a new idealized image.

#### 4 Conclusion

John Cheever's *The Housebreaker of Shady Hill and Other Stories* explores and dramatizes the complex nature of nostalgia in terms of its function, content and its relationship with time and place. The stories of this cycle reveal that nostalgia usually gains its power, form, and function to fulfill the needs and desires of the present. The power of that nostalgia is significant since it either enables characters to survive the present and turn to the future, or numbs all their efforts to deal with their present problems. The cycle also shows how nostalgia has to distort or invent the past in order to function. As individual stories reveal, the past is almost always unsatisfying as it contains the same conditions the characters try to solve or avoid.

As a collective experience, Cheever's cycle manages to develop an image of the community in Shady Hill. Similar patterns of nostalgia in many stories points to a sense of the past that the whole community shares. Many characters talk of Shady Hill as a place of love, friendship, innocence and morality. However, the stories undermine that collective vision because it is gradually revealed that Shady Hill is a place of corruption, vanity, adultery, immorality and even crime. Likewise, nostalgia serves as a defense against the forces of change, progress and development. As a collective mechanism, it aims to correct past dishonesties and injustices, and to battle against everything that might endanger the community's idealized conception of itself.

Finally, Cheever's cycle successfully employs Smith's concept of critical nostalgia or a double vision that simultaneously recognizes nostalgia's corrective and prospective potential, and its tendency to be destructive or to evoke the past that never was. At the same time, it shows how nostalgia can be both powerful and unsatisfying. Thus, it registers the tension that exists between the ideal or imagined

past or place, and the painful reality that motivates the very same process of idealization or pure invention.

## Bibliography

- Boym, Svetlana. (2001). *The Future of Nostalgia*. Basic Books: New York.
- Cheever, John. (1958). *The Housebreaker of Shady Hill and Other Stories*. New York: Harper.
- Cheever, John. (1978). *The Stories of John Cheever*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Chilton, Martin. (2015). John Cheever: 'the Chekhov of the suburbs'. *The Telegraph*. [Online], 15 October. Available from: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/books/authors/john-cheever-master-of-the-short-story/> [Accessed: May 12th, 2023]
- Ingram, Forrest L. (1971). *Representative Short Story Cycles of the Twentieth Century: Studies in a Literary Genre*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Kendle, Burton. (1982). "The Passion of Nostalgia in the Short Stories of John Cheever." In *Critical Essays on John Cheever*, by R. G. Collins, 219-231. Boston: G. K. Hall & Co.
- Mann, Susan Garland. (1989). *The Short Story Cycle: A Genre Companion and Reference Guide*. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Nagel, James. (2001). *The Contemporary American Short-Story Cycle: The Ethnic Resonance of Genre*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Rupp, Richard H. (1982). "Of That Time, Of Those Places: The Short Stories of John Cheever." In *Critical Essays on John Cheever*, by R. G. Collins, 231-251. Boston: G. K. Hall & Co.
- Santesso, Aaron. (2006). *A Careful Longing: The Poetics and Problems of Nostalgia*. Newark: University of Delaware Press.
- Smith, Jennifer J. (2017). *The American Short Story Cycle*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Su, John J. (2005). *Ethics and Nostalgia in the Contemporary Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

