

John Hoyer Updike, born March 18, 1932 in Shillington, Pennsylvania), is an American novelist, poet, short story writer and literary critic. Updike's most famous work is his Rabbit series (Rabbit Run; Rabbit Redux; Rabbit Is Rich; Rabbit At Rest; and Rabbit Remembered). Rabbit is Rich and Rabbit at Rest both won Pulitzer Prizes for Updike. Describing his subject as "the American small town, Protestant middle class," Updike is well known for his careful craftsmanship and prolific output (an extremely rare combination), having published 22 novels and more than a dozen short story collections as well as poetry, literary criticism and children's books. Hundreds of his stories, reviews, and poems have appeared in *The New Yorker* since 1954.

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As a teenager, Updike was encouraged by his mother, who was also a writer, to write while attending Shillington High School. Updike and his mother had the skin disease psoriasis. Updike grew up in a relatively poor family. Lack of money did not stop him from entering Harvard University on a full scholarship. He served as president of the Harvard Lampoon, before graduating summa cum laude (he wrote a thesis on Robert Herrick) in 1954 with a degree in English. He became a regular contributor to *The New Yorker*. After Harvard, however he decided to pursue a career in graphic arts. Updike went to The Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art in Oxford.

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