



A WELL-READ ONLINE COMMUNITY

Museum of Extraordinary Things (Hoffman)

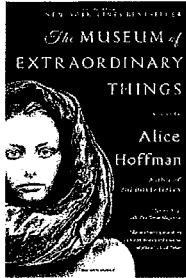
MOVIES Meet

Presented by SCREEN THOUGHTS

Club

[\(http://www.litlovers.com/\)](http://www.litlovers.com/) [\(http://www.screenthoughts.net/#litlovers/f97yw/\)](http://www.screenthoughts.net/#litlovers/f97yw/)

Summary	Author Bio	Book Reviews	Discussion Questions	Full Version	Print
---------	------------	--------------	----------------------	--------------	-------



(http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1451693575/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1451693575&linkCode=as2&tag=litl-20&linkId=35575DPALRJ3VC21)

The Museum of Extraordinary Things*Alice Hoffman, 2014*

Scribner

384 pp.

ISBN-13: 9781451693577

Summary

Mesmerizing and illuminating, Alice Hoffman's *The Museum of Extraordinary Things* is the story of an electric and impassioned love between two vastly different souls in New York during the volatile first decades of the twentieth century.

Coralie Sardie is the daughter of the sinister impresario behind The Museum of Extraordinary Things, a Coney Island boardwalk freak show that thrills the masses. An exceptional swimmer, Coralie appears as the Mermaid in her father's "museum," alongside performers like the Wolfman, the Butterfly Girl, and a one-hundred-year-old turtle. One night Coralie stumbles upon a striking young man taking pictures of moonlit trees in the woods off the Hudson River.

The dashing photographer is Eddie Cohen, a Russian immigrant who has run away from his father's Lower East Side Orthodox community and his job as a tailor's apprentice. When Eddie photographs the devastation on the streets of New York following the infamous Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, he becomes embroiled in the suspicious mystery behind a young woman's disappearance and ignites the heart of Coralie.

With its colorful crowds of bootleggers, heiresses, thugs, and idealists, New York itself becomes a riveting character as Hoffman weaves her trademark magic, romance, and masterful storytelling to unite Coralie and Eddie in a sizzling, tender, and moving story of young love in tumultuous times. *The Museum of Extraordinary Things* is Alice Hoffman at her most spellbinding. (From the publisher.)

Author Bio

- Birth—March 16, 1952
- Where—New York, New York, USA
- Education—B.A., Adelphi Univ.; M.A., Stanford Univ.
- Currently—lives in Boston, Massachusetts

Born in the 1950s to college-educated parents who divorced when she was young, Alice Hoffman was raised by her single, working mother in a blue-collar Long Island neighborhood. Although she felt like an outsider growing up, she discovered that these feelings of not quite belonging positioned her uniquely to observe people from a distance. Later, she would hone this viewpoint in stories that captured the full intensity of the human experience.

After high school, Hoffman went to work for the Doubleday factory in Garden City. But the eight-hour, supervised workday was not for her, and she quit before lunch on her first day! She enrolled in night school at Adelphi University, graduating in 1971 with a degree in English. She went on to attend Stanford University's Creative Writing Center on a Mirrellees Fellowship. Her mentor at Stanford, the great teacher and novelist Albert Guerard, helped to get her first story published in the literary magazine *Fiction*. The story attracted the attention of legendary editor Ted Solotaroff, who asked if she had written any longer fiction. She hadn't — but immediately set to work. In 1977, when Hoffman was 25, her first novel, *Property Of*, was published to great fanfare.

Since that remarkable debut, Hoffman has carved herself a unique niche in American fiction. A favorite with teens as well as adults, she renders life's deepest mysteries immediately understandable in stories suffused with magic realism and a dreamy, fairy-tale sensibility. (In a 1994 article for the *New York Times*, interviewer Ruth Reichl described the magic in Hoffman's books as a casual, regular occurrence — "...so offhand that even the most skeptical reader can accept it.") Her characters' lives are transformed by uncontrollable forces — love and loss, sorrow and bliss, danger and death.

Hoffman's 1997 novel *Here on Earth* was selected as an Oprah Book Club pick, but even without Winfrey's powerful endorsement, her books have become huge bestsellers — including three that have been adapted for the movies: *Practical Magic* (1995), *The River King* (2000), and her YA fable *Aquamarine* (2001).

Hoffman is a breast cancer survivor; and like many people who consider themselves blessed with luck, she believes strongly in giving back. For this reason, she donated her advance from her 1999 short story collection *Local Girls* to help create the Hoffman Breast Center at Mt. Auburn Hospital in Cambridge, MA

Extras

From a 2003 Barnes & Noble interview:

- Hoffman has written a number of children's books, including *Fireflies: A Winter's Tale* (1999), *Horsefly* (2000), and *Moondog* (2004).
- *Aquamarine* was written for Hoffman's best friend, Jo Ann, who dreamed of the freedom of mermaids as she battled brain cancer.
- *Here on Earth* is a modern version of Hoffman's favorite novel, *Wuthering Heights*.
- Hoffman has been honored with the Massachusetts Book Award for her teen novel *Incantation*.
- *When asked what books most influenced her life or career, here's what she said:*

Edward Eager's brilliant series of suburban magic: *Half Magic*, *Magic*

by the Lake, Magic or Not, Knight's Castle, The Time Garden, Seven-Day Magic, The Well Wishers. Anything by Ray Bradbury, Shirley Jackson, J. D. Salinger, Grace Paley. My favorite book: Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. (Author bio and interview from Barnes & Noble.)

Book Reviews

[A] collection of curiosities, each fascinating in its own right, but haphazardly connected as a whole.... Though [two interconnecting] stories have Hoffman's trademark magical realism and hold great potential, their connection is tenuous—literally and thematically—and their complexities leave them incompletely explored.

Publishers Weekly

New York, 1911. Coralie Sardie works for her father, the "professor" and impresario of the Museum of Extraordinary Things, a freak show in Coney Island.... Hoffman blends social realism, historical fiction, romance, and mystery in a fast-paced and dramatic novel filled with colorful characters and vivid scenes of life in New York more than a century ago. —*Leslie Patterson, Rehoboth, MA*

Library Journal

Discussion Questions

1. The novel is framed by two spectacular fires. Why do you think the author chose to structure the novel this way? What effect does each fire have on the major characters and on the people of Manhattan and Brooklyn?
2. How does Raymond Morris, known as the Wolfman, change Coralie's perception of her father and their circumscribed world? What parallels does Coralie find between her own life and those of the characters in *Jane Eyre*?
3. Why does Coralie keep Maureen in the dark about her night swims and her father's sexual exploitation? Would Maureen have been able to protect Coralie if she had known?
4. Eddie says "the past was what we carried with us, threaded to the future, and we decided whether to keep it close or let it go" (139). Was Eddie able to let his past go? Did you sympathize with his decision to move away from his father?
5. Why does Eddie feel compelled to solve the mystery of Hannah Weiss's disappearance? What makes him a good "finder"?
6. When Coralie steps into the lion's cage, the trainer Bonavita tells her "you have a form of bravery inside you" (196). Do you agree? Does Coralie agree? In what instances does she defy her father, and when does she acquiesce to his demands?
7. Consider Coralie's claim that "curiosity had always been my downfall" (253). Did her curiosity about her father and the outside world worsen her situation or improve it? How naïve is Coralie?
8. What did you make of the living wonders at *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*? How did their treatment differ at Dreamland? What enables some of the wonders,

such as the Butterfly Girl, to achieve a semblance of a normal life?

9. What sort of atmosphere does Alice Hoffman create by using dreams as a recurring motif? How do Coralie's and Eddie's dreams expose their inner lives and connect them to the past and future?

10. Professor Sardie and Abraham Hochman both present themselves as things they are not. How did you feel about their deception and self-aggrandizement? Do circumstances make one worse than the other? In what ways did the culture of early-twentieth-century New York City favor the corrupt and those who bent the rules?

11. Where, and to whom, did Eddie look "to find what [he] was missing" (327)? What did Moses Levy, Abraham Hochman, the hermit, and Mr. Weiss each have to teach him?

12. Why did Maureen choose to stay with the Professor and Coralie, in spite of his treatment of her? Of the lessons that Maureen taught Coralie, which were the most important?

13. Consider the role that animals play in the novel. Why does Coralie save the tortoise? What is the symbolism of the trout that Eddie cannot kill? In what other instances do animals reveal something about a character?

14. In thinking of her father, Coralie says "perhaps there is evil in certain people, a streak of meanness that cannot be erased by circumstance or fashioned into something brand new by love" (246). Do you think a person can be innately evil? Are the morally ambiguous actions of other characters, such as Eddie or the liveryman, redeemed?

15. Hoffman's portrait of New York City is of a rapidly evolving, volatile place. Which historical details stood out most vividly to you? If you've spent time in New York, was it hard to imagine the city as it was in the early-twentieth-century? What places are currently undergoing similar transformations or experiencing similar tensions? (*Questions issued by the publisher.*)

top of page (summary)

ADD THIS

Site by BOOM (<http://www.boomsuper.com>)  (<http://www.boomsuper.com>)

LitLovers © 2016

About the Author

Full text biography:

Alice Hoffman

Birth Date : 1952

Place of Birth : United States, New York, New York

Nationality: American

Occupation : Novelist

Table of Contents:

Awards

Personal Information

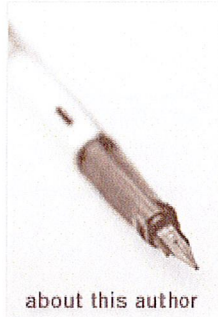
Career

Writings

Media Adaptions

Sidelights

Related Information



Awards:

Mirrelles fellow, Stanford University, 1975; Bread Loaf fellowship, summer, 1976; Notable Books of 1979 list, *Library Journal*, for *The Drowning Season*.

Personal Information:

Born March 16, 1952, in New York, NY; married Tom Martin (a writer); children: Jake, Zack. **Education:** Adelphi University, B.A., 1973; Stanford University, M.A., 1975. **Addresses:** Home: Boston, MA. Agent: Amanda Urban, ICM Partners, 730 5th Ave., New York, NY 10019.

Career Information:

Writer, 1975--. Hoffman Breast Center, cofounder; Brandeis University, Women's Studies Research Center, visiting research associate.

Writings:

- *Independence Day* (screenplay), Warner Bros. (Burbank, CA), 1983.
- *Survival Lessons*, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill (Chapel Hill, NC), 2013.

NOVELS

- *Property Of*, Farrar, Straus (New York, NY), 1977, reprinted, Farrar (New York, NY), 2009.
- *The Drowning Season*, Dutton (New York, NY), 1979.
- *Angel Landing*, Putnam (New York, NY), 1980.
- *White Horses*, Putnam (New York, NY), 1982, reprinted, Berkley Books (New York, NY), 1999.
- *Fortune's Daughter*, Putnam (New York, NY), 1985.
- *Illumination Night*, Putnam (New York, NY), 1987.
- *At Risk*, Putnam (New York, NY), 1988.
- *Seventh Heaven*, Putnam (New York, NY), 1990.
- *Turtle Moon*, Berkley (New York, NY), 1993.
- *Second Nature*, Putnam (New York, NY), 1994.
- *Practical Magic*, Putnam (New York, NY), 1995.

- *Here on Earth*, Putnam (New York, NY), 1997.
- *The River King*, Putnam (New York, NY), 2000.
- *Blue Diary*, Putnam (New York, NY), 2001.
- *The Probable Future*, Doubleday (New York, NY), 2003.
- *The Ice Queen*, Little, Brown (New York, NY), 2005.
- *Skylight Confessions*, Little, Brown (New York, NY), 2007.
- *The Third Angel*, Shaye Areheart (New York, NY), 2008.
- *The Story Sisters*, Shaye Areheart (New York, NY), 2009.
- *The Dovekeepers*, Scribner (New York, NY), 2011.
- *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*, Scribner (New York, NY), 2014.

SHORT STORIES

- *Local Girls*, Putnam (New York, NY), 1999.
- *Blackbird House*, Doubleday (New York, NY), 2004.
- *The Red Garden*, Shaye Areheart Books (New York, NY), 2010.

YOUNG ADULT NOVELS

- *Aquamarine*, Scholastic (New York, NY), 2001.
- *Indigo*, Scholastic (New York, NY), 2002.
- *Green Angel*, Scholastic (New York, NY), 2003.
- *The Foretelling*, Little, Brown (New York, NY), 2005.
- *Incantation*, Little, Brown (New York, NY), 2006.
- *Green Witch* (sequel to *Green Angel*), Scholastic Press (New York, NY), 2010.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

- *Fireflies*, illustrated by Wayne McLoughlin, Hyperion (New York, NY), 1997.
- *Horsefly*, illustrated by Steve Johnson, Hyperion (New York, NY), 2000.
- (With Wolfe Martin) *Moondog*, illustrated by Yumi Heo, Scholastic (New York, NY), 2004.
- *Nightbird*, Wendy Lamb Books (New York, NY), 2015.

Also author of other screenplays. Author of the Web log *Alice Hoffman*. Contributor of stories to periodicals, including *Ms.*, *Redbook*, *Fiction*, *American Review*, *New York Times*, *Boston Globe* magazine, *Kenyon Review*, *Architectural Digest*, *Gourmet*, *Self*, and *Playgirl*.

Media Adaptions:

Practical Magic was adapted by Robin Swicord, Akiva Goldsman, and Adam Brooks into a film directed by Griffin Dunne, starring Sandra Bullock, Nicole Kidman, and Aidan Quinn, and released by Warner Bros., 1998; *Aquamarine* was made into a film directed by Elizabeth Allen, produced by Susan Cartsonis, and released by Twentieth Century-Fox, 2006; sound recordings were made of *Local Girls* and *Skylight Confessions*.

Sidelights:

Through the course of numerous novels, Alice Hoffman's work has been characterized by "a shimmering prose style, the fusing of fantasy and realism, [and] the preoccupation with the way the mythic weaves itself into the everyday," Alexandra Johnson summarized in the *Boston Review*. "Hoffman's narrative domain is the domestic, the daily. Yet her vision--and voice--are lyrical," the critic continued. "She is a writer whose prose style is often praised as painterly, and, indeed, Hoffman's fictional world is like a Vermeer: a beautifully crafted study of the interior life."

The protagonist of Hoffman's first novel, *Property Of*, is an unnamed seventeen-year-old girl enamored of McKay, the leader of an urban gang involved in violence and drugs; the story of their yearlong relationship is what London *Times*

Literary Supplement contributor Zachary Leader called "a sort of punk or pop-gothic *Jane Eyre*." Despite the "harsh and gritty" quality of the world it portrays, *Property Of* is nevertheless "a remarkably envisioned novel, almost mythic in its cadences, hypnotic," Richard R. Lingeman observed in the *New York Times*. "McKay and the heroine are like tragic lovers in a courtly romance played out in candy stores, clubhouses and mean streets." Lingeman went on to write: "Hoffman imbues her juvenile delinquents with a romantic intensity that lifts them out of sociology." Edith Milton offered a similar assessment, commenting in the *Yale Review* that "the narrative is engrossing because Hoffman creates characters touched by legend." The critic elaborated that Hoffman is able to balance "parody and sentiment, cutting her own flights of panting prose with acid self-mockery."

While the writing in *Property Of* has "speed, wit, and a mordant lyricism," Margo Jefferson remarked in *Ms.* that "*The Drowning Season* has extravagance and generosity as well." *The Drowning Season* follows Esther the White and Esther the Black, a grandmother and granddaughter who overcome a past of failed communication to slowly establish a relationship. Like Hoffman's first novel, *The Drowning Season* functions on two levels, as Susan Wood suggested in the *Washington Post*: "*The Drowning Season*, just as hypnotic and mythic in its language and rhythms, reverberates with situations and characters that suggest ancient myths and European folk tales and seems on one level to function as a symbolic, allegorical tale in a modern setting. Yet it is very much a novel about believable and imperfect human beings, as concrete and individualized as the family next door." Barry Siegel found Esther the White in particular "a truly compelling character," writing in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review* that while "she is the source of her family's malaise ... Hoffman sees in her something much more complex than a villain." The reviewer commented that Hoffman "is a superb writer who brings us to understand and to care about all her characters. ... Hoffman at all times remains in control of her fine narrative."

Hoffman followed *The Drowning Season* with *Angel Landing*, a romance set near a nuclear power plant, and *White Horses*, the story of a young girl's obsession with her older brother. Teresa, the protagonist of *White Horses*, has been brought up hearing the family legend of the Arias, dangerous and beautiful young outlaws who carry women off to exciting lives; this legend led Teresa's mother into an unhappy marriage, and Teresa herself into an incestuous love for Silver, whom she sees as her ideal Aria.

"Incest may be the most difficult theme for a novelist to undertake," stated *Newsweek* contributor Peter S. Prescott, "yet Hoffman here makes it tolerable by the mythic mold in which she has cast her story." *New York Times Book Review* contributor Anne Tyler likewise saw a mythic dimension in the novel: "*White Horses* combines the concrete and the dreamlike. Its characters are people we think we recognize at first; but then on second thought we're not so sure." The reviewer continued: "There's an almost seamless transition from the real to the unreal, back and forth and back again." Stephanie Vaughn, however, faulted the novel's symbolism as "ask[ing] us to see an epic dimension that the story does not quite deliver," as she remarked in her *Washington Post* review. While Tyler also thought that the novel is at times "burdened by the very musicality that was so appealing in the beginning," she admitted that "these are quibbles, and very minor quibbles at that. The overall impression is one of abundant life, masterfully orchestrated by the author." *White Horses*, Tyler wrote, "is a satisfying novel, at the same time mysterious and believable, and it marks a significant advance for Alice Hoffman."

While *Fortune's Daughter*, in the vein of Hoffman's earlier novels, "has the quality of folk tale--of amazing events calmly recounted," Perri Klass asserted in the *New York Times Book Review*, unlike *White Horses* it has "no ... explicit myth. Instead, the sense of magic and elemental force arises from the central mystery of childbirth." Klass continued: "This novel's great strength lies in its two heroines, who both find themselves drawn, without plans, hopes or full understanding, into the inevitably mythological process of pregnancy and childbirth." Rae, pregnant with her first child, has just been deserted by the man for whom she left her home and traveled across a continent. Seeking reassurance, she finds Lila, a fortune teller who reads a child's death in Rae's tea leaves. Against Lila's wishes, Rae enlists the older woman's assistance with her pregnancy, evoking Lila's memories of the child she gave up for adoption over twenty years ago. The result, observed Robin Hemley in the *Chicago Tribune Book World*, is "an elegant and evocative novel that conjures up a kind of modern-day female mythology."

Some critics, however, such as *Boston Review* contributor Patricia Meyer Spacks, felt the plot of *Fortune's Daughter*

verges on "soap-opera sentimentalities." Nevertheless, they acknowledged, as Klass wrote, that "the peculiar offbeat humor keeps the narrative from drifting into melodrama." Spacks elaborated: "It is in its juxtaposition of the mythic, the apocalyptic, with the resolutely ordinary, in its portrait of eccentric characters living in a very familiar world, that this novel finds its unique voice. It is beautifully and matter-of-factly told, and it leaves the reader with an almost bewildered sense that this primal mythological level does exist in everyday reality, and that there is no event, from the standard miracle of childbirth to the most bizarre magic imaginable, that cannot occur in a setting of familiar, everyday details."

"*Illumination Night*, Hoffman's sixth novel, is in many ways her most subtle," *Boston Review* contributor Alexandra Johnson claimed, describing it as "a powerful if often disturbing look at the interior lives, domestic and emotional, of a young family and the teenage girl set on destroying them all." Andre and Vonny are a young couple concerned about their son's lack of growth and the tension in their marriage caused by the unwanted attentions of Jody, a neighboring sixteen-year-old, towards Andre. "This may sound like soap opera," *New York Times* contributor Christopher Lehmann-Haupt declared, but Hoffman "has enough power of empathy to make her characters matter to us. Daringly mixing comedy with tragedy, and the quotidian with the fabulous, she has created a narrative that somehow makes myth out of the sticky complexities of contemporary marriage." Hoffman "has a penchant for finding a near-gothic strangeness and enchantment on the edges of everyday experience," Jack Sullivan commented in the *Washington Post Book World*.

"Subtle touches here and there make this intelligent novel shine," Gwyneth Cravens maintained in the *New York Times Book Review*. "Ms. Hoffman knows how to tell a story in clear language and how to avoid subordinating the meanderings of temperament to logic or plot. The characters suddenly, and believably, change their behavior toward one another in the presence of the irrational." Other critics have also remarked on the quality of the author's characterizations. Lehmann-Haupt, for example, observed that "Hoffman writes so simply about human passions that her characters are branded onto one's memory," while London *Times* contributor Philip Howard stated that Hoffman "hits bull's eyes on the incomprehensions between the young and the old, on the magic and pain of ordinary life." As Candice Russell noted in her *Chicago Tribune* review, the author's "omniscient voice ... explores the underpinnings of her characters, who become increasingly connected and interdependent." Sullivan similarly praised Hoffman's narrative for its "unusually fluid form of subjectivity that becomes a kind of total omniscience ... without breaking the rhythm of her prose or storyline. From a technical as well as emotional standpoint," the reviewer commented, "this is an impressive, stirring performance."

With *At Risk*, the story of a young girl whose AIDS precipitates a family crisis, Hoffman "is mainstreaming a refined literary talent," *Time* writer R.Z. Sheppard recounted. By taking as her subject such a topical social concern, however, Hoffman has drawn criticism from some reviewers for letting the issue of AIDS overcome the story. *Washington Post* contributor Jonathan Yardley, for example, contended that the novel "is very much wrought from material offered by the headlines, yet it fails to shape that material into anything approximating life."

Because the issues in *At Risk* are more self-evident than in the author's other work, some reviewers have suggested that the novel does not contain as much of a "magical" element as do her other books. But *Newsweek* contributor Laura Shapiro contended that "this wonderful book isn't markedly different in style or imagination from Hoffman's last novel." As *Chicago Tribune Books* contributor Michele Souda observed, the novel contains many "dark and bizarre experiences that remind us how much Hoffman has always trusted her characters' dreams and how well she has invented them." The author explained to London *Times* contributor Catherine Bennett that "part of the reason [for the diminished emphasis on magic] is that AIDS took the place of that, that was the inexplicable part of it. AIDS is like something you'd invent, it's bizarre, it's horrible, it's kind of like a spaceship--this disease just landing. I felt that anything else I was going to add was going to reduce it." The result, wrote Souda, is that Hoffman "has taken the nightmare of our time, stripped it of statistics and social rhetoric, and placed it in the raw center of family life."

In *Seventh Heaven* Hoffman returns again to the illusive quiet of suburbia, this time in 1959--the cusp of a new, noisier era. Into a seemingly idyllic New York community comes Nora Silk, a divorced woman whose unconventional manner disturbs the peaceful facade of the neighborhood. Nora is struggling to begin a new life and be a good mother to her children; she has little concern for what her neighbors think of her, giving her a freedom others resent. But as she

gradually adjusts to her surroundings, so does the community begin to accept her and overcome their own inhibitions.

"Hoffman is out to remind us that all those suburban stereotypes, creaky facades though they may often be, are propped up by some very real, and very basic, hopes and fears," Alida Becker remarked in the *New York Times Book Review*. The novel contains "many of the plot twists you'd expect from a late-fifties's melodrama," the reviewer continued, adding that "what's unexpected, though, is the wonderful blend of humor, shrewdness and compassion that Ms. Hoffman brings to these familiar scenes."

Detroit News contributor Alice Vachss praised the author's writing: "Hoffman's usual abilities--her enchanting storytelling and her gift for interweaving magic and realism--are even more finely honed than in her previous novels." Hoffman's mystical elements are effectively incorporated into *Seventh Heaven*, according to some critics. *People* contributor Ralph Novak commented that the author "makes greater use of the supernatural--or the allure of the supernatural--without compromising her insight into human behavior." This insight is considerable, for "Hoffman has intuitive grasp of the thoughts and feelings that are masked by conventional behavior," Sybil Steinberg noted in a review in *Publishers Weekly*, commending in particular the author's "unerring understanding of people of nearly every age and across a broad social spectrum." *Seventh Heaven*, asserted Shapiro, "is one of the rare novels so abundant with life it seems to overflow its own pages. ... Hoffman has always enjoyed a coterie of devoted fans, but her immensely winning novels deserve a much wider readership. *Seventh Heaven*, her eighth and best, confirms her place as one of the finest writers of her generation."

Turtle Moon and *Second Nature*, Hoffman's next two novels, again feature single women struggling to define life on their own terms. The novels are also infused with Hoffman's trademark use of magic and heightened realism. *Turtle Moon* is set in a sleepy Florida town with a large population of divorced women and follows the exploits of Bethany, a woman who has fled with her infant daughter from a child-custody fight; Lucy Rosen, a single mother; her son, Keith, a mean boy who bullies his peers and who steals at will; Julian Cash, an acerbic, taciturn policeman; and Julian's dog, Arrow, who shares his owner's temperament. The story revolves around the disappearance of Keith with Bethany's baby and the quest to solve a local murder. Reviewing the work in the *New York Times Book Review*, Frederick Busch averred that "Hoffman writes quite wonderfully about the magic in our lives and in the battered, indifferent world. I don't know that she's written better." *New York Times* contributor Michiko Kakutani had a less enthusiastic view of the book, however, stating that it "showcases Hoffman's assurance as a writer, and her less admirable penchant for situating her characters in a slick, tricked-up plot that's decorated with pointlessly whimsical asides."

Second Nature is a tale about a wild man raised by wolves who brings love and joy to a lonely woman's suburban world. *New York Times Book Review* contributor Howard Frank Mosher called the novel "magical and daring" and commented that the book is written "with grace and beauty, making it at once [Hoffman's] richest and wisest, as well as her boldest, novel to date." Lehmann-Haupt, writing in the *New York Times*, thought *Second Nature*'s premise about the conflict between nature and so-called civilization "familiar almost to the point of cliché," but liked some aspects of the story, "many of whose complications are richly ambiguous."

Hoffman's eleventh novel, *Practical Magic*, is set in a small Massachusetts town and features a matriarchal dynasty, the Owens. Specifically, the novel focuses on two Owens sisters, Gillian and Sally, and the aunts who raise them. As children, Gillian and Sally sneak down from bed to listen as their aunts prescribe love potions for the town women. Determined not to suffer from any such lovesickness when they grow older, the girls take differing paths. Gillian becomes a promiscuous vagabond who never marries or has children, while dutiful Sally survives the death of her husband and subordinates her own desires to those of her daughters. Terming *Practical Magic* "a particularly arch and dexterous example of [Hoffman's] narrative powers," London *Times Literary Supplement* contributor Lorna Sage wrote that "Hoffman spins out the intrigue with show-off skill." Writing in the *New York Times Book Review*, Mark Childress noted that "Hoffman's trademark narrative voice is upbeat, breathless and rather bouncy. She creates vivid characters, she keeps things moving along, and she's not above using sleight of hand and prestidigitation to achieve her considerable effects."

Here on Earth deals with a married woman, March Murray, who becomes involved with an old lover, Hollis, when she comes back from California to her native Massachusetts for a funeral. It has echoes of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering*

Heights. Hollis, for instance, resembles Bronte's dark, brooding Heathcliff. *New York Times Book Review* contributor Karen Karbo found it implausible that a smart, modern woman like March would resume a relationship with Hollis, and thought the course of their affair sadly predictable. "The madness of being madly in love is one of the most difficult subjects to write about convincingly," Karbo observed. "And you've got to give Hoffman points for trying. Unfortunately, just as March is too good for Hollis, Hoffman is too good for a story like this."

Local Girls is Hoffman's first collection of short stories, which are linked by their characters, members of a dysfunctional Long Island family, the Samuelsons. They follow the key character, Gretel, over roughly a decade of her life, beginning in her teen years. As she grows to womanhood, the intelligent, observant Gretel has to cope with troubles, including her parents' bitter divorce, her brother's drug addiction, and her mother's serious illness. Like many of Hoffman's other works, *Local Girls* has a strong element of female bonding--Gretel's best friend, Jill, and cousin Margot are her main sources of emotional support--and touches of magical realism. *Redbook* contributor Rose Martelli observed that Hoffman "turns [the Samuelsons'] trials into a celebration of family, revealing what it takes to brave real crises together." A *Publishers Weekly* contributor noted that Hoffman's "disarming wit" keeps the tales from becoming depressing, adding, "she indicates that the human spirit can survive despite the cruel workings of fate." "These stories sometimes have a sketchy feel," remarked Barbara Hoffert in a *Library Journal* review. *New York Times Book Review* commentator Sarah Ferguson stated: "The stories suffer from a debilitating overlap when they're read as a collection. As in a soap opera, where any episode may be the viewer's first, background information is repeated and characters are reintroduced ad nauseam."

The River King revolves around Haddan School, an exclusive preparatory academy in a picturesque small town in Massachusetts. The plot turns on an investigation into the death of a student named Gus Pierce, a "Holden Caulfield-like misfit," as *Entertainment Weekly* contributor George Hodgman noted. Local police officer Abel Grey suspects that Gus's drowning was no accident or suicide, but murder, and in the course of his detective work he becomes attracted to photography teacher Betsy Chase, who is engaged to another Haddan faculty member. Meanwhile, Carlin Leander, a scholarship student who had befriended Gus, encounters what she believes to be his ghost. "The puzzle of the drowning helps propel Hoffman's at times meandering narrative, but she's more interested in the mysteries of love, the crimes of the heart," observed Nancy Pate in the *Orlando Sentinel*. A *Publishers Weekly* contributor praised *The River King* as "a many-layered morality tale" and Hoffman as "an inventive author with a distinctive touch." *Booklist* contributor Donna Seaman credited the author with "illuminating the power of emotion and the exquisite mysteries of life." Hodgman, however, was less impressed, finding some of the characters sketchily drawn, "basic romantic types," although he felt Hoffman "does a nice job of weaving together a meandering tapestry of plots." Amanda Fortini, writing in the *New York Times Book Review*, had a similar take, applauding Hoffman's "good old-fashioned storytelling" but deeming her characters "so numerous that she rarely has time to develop them beyond mere tag lines." *Library Journal* contributor Reba Leiding deemed the novel a bit too atmospheric: "One wishes Hoffman had pared down the precious local descriptions and allowed the plot, which has some unexpected twists, to shine through." Pate, though, concluded that Hoffman "is a writer who can cast a spell."

Blue Diary takes a once happy family and puts a nonremovable scar on each of the members. When Ethan, a carpenter, baseball coach, and volunteer fireman, confesses to his wife, Jorie, that he is guilty of the rape and murder charges against him, she vows to learn the whole truth despite the pain she knows it will cause her. Reviews for the novel were mostly positive. A *Publishers Weekly* contributor recalled that Hoffman often creates a rosy picture at the start of her stories before turning things around completely. For *Blue Diary*, the contributor noted, "Hoffman's strategy is effective." Connie Ogle, writing in the *Miami Herald*, described Hoffman's writing as "lyrical." *Booklist* contributor Seaman wrote that this "tale of abrupt reversals and courageous, unpopular choices is as suspenseful as it is lyrical and provocative."

The Probable Future revolves around a clan of women in Unity, Massachusetts, who trace their ancestry back to Rebecca Sparrow, a woman who was tried and executed in the mid-1600s for being a witch. The Sparrow girls, upon turning thirteen years old, all come into their unique powers. Their personal lives, however, do not benefit from these powers until the thirteenth-generation daughter is born. Reviewers were mostly positive. Seaman, again writing in *Booklist*, noted that Hoffman's "cast of characters is unfailingly magnetic, from her eye-rolling teenagers to her wryly

in-love seniors to her suddenly aflame fortysomethings." *Kliatt* contributor Janet Julian described the story as one "of love and graceful death, of mistakes and forgiveness, of willowy prose and life reflected in nature." Janice P. Nimura, writing in the *New York Times Book Review*, stated: "Hoffman's greatest strength here is her ability to keep the boundaries of magic indistinct." Nimura went on to conclude that "Hoffman's fans will not be disappointed."

As in *Local Girls*, Hoffman again uses interconnected stories in *Blackbird House*, a book in which the common bond of the stories is a Cape Cod farmhouse. For reviewer Ellen Shapiro, writing in *People*, this device was problematic: "When all the dust settles, it is the house itself that emerges as the book's enduring--and inspiring--character." *A Publishers Weekly* contributor praised the book: "Hoffman's lyrical prose weaves an undeniable spell."

Hoffman's 2005 novel, *The Ice Queen*, features an eight-year-old, unnamed protagonist who wishes her mother dead during a fight, and to her horror, the wish comes true. She grows up unfeeling, with a heart made of what she imagines to be ice, until, as an adult, she is struck by lightning. She seeks out a fiery man who also survived a strike, and the opposites fall passionately in love. "The characters interact with a crackle of electricity, and the book's payoffs are subtle and insightful, and while unexpected, not unearned," stated Charles De Lint in the *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*. "Hoffman incorporates elements of fairy tales, ... chaos theory, and magic realism," Sandy Freund wrote in *School Library Journal*.

Hoffman's 2007 novel, *Skylight Confessions*, tells the story of a family and the loves that have shaped their lives and haunted them, both metaphorically and literally. "Through the use of spare, almost simplistic language and sentence structure, as well as concrete images, Hoffman constructs a narrative that elevates a family drama filled with tragedy and loss into a saga worthy of Icarus himself," wrote Norah Piehl in a review in *Bookreporter.com*. "This is a mythic tale that ... offers tentative reconciliation, cautious forgiveness and a belief that people just might be able to fly."

The story revolves around the meeting and marriage of Arlyn Singer and John Moody. The two meet when Arlyn, grieving over the death of her father, expects someone to show up on her street and change her life. When John stops at the family's house to ask for directions, Arlyn believes he is the one and quickly seduces him. However, years later, after the birth of their morose son, Sam, the two find little comfort in each other as they both realize that they are opposites in far too many ways. John commits himself to his work while Arlyn goes on to have an affair. Arlyn eventually gives birth to a second child, Blanca. She eventually leaves Arlyn. The children, meanwhile, are brought up their stepmother and Meredith, their nanny. As Sam succumbs to drug addiction, both Blanca, who is estranged from the family, and Meredith, are determined to save him, facing their own demons from the past in the process.

"Among the many pleasures of *Skylight Confessions* is a sense of continuous corner-turning, a chain of surprises," wrote Ann Harleman in her *Boston Globe* critique. "As in fairy tales, the narrating voice is often remote, giving us summaries of the action, so that it feels as if we see the characters through the wrong end of a telescope. But then, at rhythmic intervals, the sudden intimacy of a scene delivers them to us in vivid three-dimensional reality." *BookLoons* Web site contributor Lyn Seippel called the novel "a moving story with touchingly tender characters who demand sympathy no matter how flawed they appear."

The Third Angel features three interlocking tales set in 1952, 1966, and 1999. The stories are told in reverse chronology, noted *Seattle Times* contributor Melinda Bargreen, so that "the reader travels back in time and learns why Room 707 of the Lion Park Hotel in London is haunted." Writing on the *Curled Up with a Good Book* Web site, Michael Leonard commented that the author "explores the interrelationships between reality and fantasy even as she interlocks her narrative with the ancient and mysterious powers of love," adding that Hoffman "also [provides] a smorgasbord of finely wrought observations on life and death."

The story begins in 1999 with Maddie, an American attorney arriving at the hotel. Readers learn about her love for Paul, her sister Allie's fiancé, Paul; Paul's illness; and the traumatic death of the sister's mother. In 1966, the story focuses on Paul's future mother, Frieda, who decides not to attend college and instead takes a job as a chambermaid at the Lion Park Hotel and becomes involved with a rock musician addicted to heroin. Frieda's father is a doctor who talks to her about his belief in angels, including the Third Angel who, as described by the author is "the one who walked among us, who sometimes lay sick in bed, begging for human compassion." The last story, which takes place in 1952, revolves

around twelve-year-old Lucy, who is the mother of Maddie and Allie. Lucy's story ultimately reveals why Room 707 is haunted.

"If the first section is somewhat heavy going, the second and third sections of *The Third Angel* amply reward the persevering reader," noted Harleman the *Boston Globe*. "Hoffman's luminous language bounces us into accepting not only coincidence but also its consequences." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* contributor Gail Pennington observed: "In the end, *The Third Angel* is a book that's hard to put away completely. Even long after it's finished, you may find its characters sneaking, like ghosts, back into your head."

Hoffman's next novel, *The Story Sisters*, features the sisters Ely, Meg, and Claire. The girls range from age twelve to age fifteen and, together, they create a secret world for themselves, speaking in a language only they can understand. Although the sisters' parents are divorced, they are happy children who spend each spring in Paris with their grandparents. However, Elv begins to seek more and more refuge in her and her sisters' secret world, eventually resorting to stealing and drug use. Her mother responds by sending her to reform school, but Elv falls in love with a heroin addict while she is there. Claire is so upset by these events that she refuses to speak. The book "is one of Hoffman's darkest novels yet, and some of Hoffman's readers may find it too dark," Keddy Ann Outlaw wrote in her *Library Journal* review. A *Kirkus Reviews* critic was also ambivalent, noting that the "radiant denouement shows love redeeming the surviving sisters, and there are beautiful moments throughout, but they don't entirely compensate for Hoffman's excesses of plot and tone." However, *Booklist* contributor Seaman found that "this is an entrancing and romantic drama shot through with radiant beauty and belief in human resilience and transformation."

Returning to short stories in *The Red Garden*, Hoffman presents another linked short story collection. Much like Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*, the tales in *The Red Garden*, revolve around the people of one town, Blackwell, Massachusetts. Hoffman's stories encompass the town's 300-year history; they linger equally on Hallie Brady, the town founder, and James Molt, a contemporary town resident and EMT. The collection provides "a transforming glimpse into small-town America," a *Library Journal* contributor wrote. Jeanne Bogino, also writing in *Library Journal*, declared: "Hoffman has done it again, crafting a poignant, compelling collection ... suffused with pathos and brightened by flashes of magic." Seconding this opinion in *Publishers Weekly*, reviewer Jessilyn Norcross asserted that "Hoffman's characters are rich," and "her setting vivid." Seaman, again writing in *Booklist*, applauded the book's "increasingly nuanced and intricate prose," which captures "the burgeoning social and psychological complexities her passionate and searching characters face in an ever-changing world." In another *Publishers Weekly* review, a critic proffered additional praise, noting: "The prose is beautiful, the characters drawn sparsely but with great compassion."

In 2011, Hoffman published an immense historical novel, *The Dovekeepers*. The time of the novel is the year 70. The place is Masada, a Jewish stronghold holding out against the Roman legions on the eastern edge of the Judean desert. The dovekeepers of the title are a group of women who literally look after doves in the late King Herod's palace at Masada. The story is based on the historical account of Flavius Josephus, who recorded how some 900 Jews held out against Roman invaders during a long siege, and when they could do so no longer, they committed suicide rather than submit to Roman authority, at least according to Josephus.

The novel focuses on the interlinked stories of several of these indomitable women, who form a community within a community. One is Yael, the daughter of a ruthless assassin who has never forgiven her for her mother's death in childbirth. Revka was a village baker who lost her husband to the Romans. She is a grandmother, and her two young grandsons became mute after witnessing the brutal murder of their mother at the hands of Roman soldiers. Shirah, from Alexandria, is a medicine woman who lives according to her own code of sexual conduct. She nurses a frightened woman through childbirth, but she is eventually accused of witchcraft. Finally, Aziza, one of Shirah's daughters, is a warrior. She poses as a man and tries to assume her brother's place in battle.

The Dovekeepers was greeted with some harsh reviews. Ron Charles, for example, reviewing the novel in the *Washington Post Book World*, found it "tiresome" and "relentless." He faulted the novel for what he regarded as its anachronistic characterization, writing: "For all Hoffman's commendable attention to physical details, her heroines' values seem closer to modern-day New Yorkers' than ancient Jews': sexual freedom, gender equality, emancipation." Charles continued: "These four women are too often cast as their own Greek chorus: reviewing, summarizing, filling us

in. A more wearing problem stems from the fact that these four intriguingly diverse narrators speak in a fairly similar, narrow range, holed up between stoic lamentation and portentous declaration." Clare Clark, writing for the *London Guardian*, had mixed reactions to the novel. On the one hand, she praised it for "moments of startling beauty," and she praised the author in this way: "Hoffman is a writer of great perception and she captures with precision the complexity of the relationships between the women, their fear and guilt, their courage, their hunger for consolation and companionship." Yet in the same review, Clark objected to the novel's length, which she found excessive, and its "archaic prose": "She adopts ... a leaden faux-biblical argot that, combined with a surfeit of historical detail, prevents the story from taking flight." Writing in the *New York Times Book Review*, Sarah Fay was particularly harsh, faulting the book for "hyperbole and forced metaphor," "overstatement," and "clumsy description." In Fay's view the book is "a long novel full of middling descriptions, hackneyed characters and histrionic plot twists."

Other critics were much more positive in their assessment. In the *London Independent*, Lesley McDowell praised the book for its "contemporary resonances" and called it a "tour de force." Roberta O'Hara, writing in *Bookreporter.com*, enthused: "Literature has rarely seen such a powerful tale of four unique women vested in love, shrouded in secrets, and urged on by boundless faith." O'Hara added that the novel is "lush in detail, evocative in memory, and authentic in its research and retelling."

In 2014, Hoffman published *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*, a return to fiction laced with magic realism. Set in 1911 New York City, this novel features two protagonists. The first is Coralie Sardie, a girl born with webbed fingers who performs as a mermaid in her father's Coney Island freak show, called the Museum of Extraordinary Things. The second is Eddie Cohen, a Russian Orthodox Jewish immigrant who has fled his father and his community in the Lower East Side to become a photographer. His sense of artistic purpose is further galvanized by documenting the aftermath of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire in Greenwich Village, and trying to discover what happened to a woman gone missing. Soon their worlds collide as a nearby amusement park called Dreamland succumbs to flames.

"Hoffman is expert at depicting people who are often considered life's 'others': outsiders, the lonely, the grief-stricken," observed Patty Rhule in a review for *USA Today*. "If you're looking for an enchanting love story rich with history and a sense of place, step right up."

"*The Museum of Extraordinary Things* will not disappoint readers longing to be swept up by a lavish tale about strange yet sympathetic people, haunted by the past and living in bizarre circumstances," wrote Katharine Weber in the *New York Times Book Review*. "But those who have admired Hoffman's best and most gracefully literary novels ... will be less enchanted, unable to ignore the hackneyed and thinly sketched writing that diminishes many scenes in these pages." Weber concluded that "*The Museum of Extraordinary Things* is, in a way, a museum of Alice Hoffman's bag of plot tricks: girls with unusual talents, love at first sight, mysterious parents, addiction and alcoholism, orphans raised by unsuitable people."

Finding that the novel "descends into high corn" near the end, *Boston Globe* critic Jan Stuart nonetheless concluded: "You can't help but admire the author's fervor for telling stories and the democratic manner in which she disseminates the love of reading: Fiends and heroines alike lose themselves in great literature. A special place in her protagonist Coralie's heart is reserved for Edgar Allen Poe, whose ghost hovers over the novel's fiery climax with detectable satisfaction."

Despite some criticisms, *Toronto Star* reviewer Deborah Dundas praised Hoffman's likewise storytelling, calling *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*, "a sweeping narrative that keeps the reader interested--paying homage to the darkness that can motivate the creative process. As a true attempt to reflect her art, this book is an exploration of how to create a world one wants to live in; a world created for the right reasons. 'The world is ours,' Eddie seems to whisper to Cora at the end. Theirs, Hoffman is saying, is a world built on love."

In addition to covering a wide range of adult themes in her novels, Hoffman is an accomplished author of children's and young adult books. One such book is *Aquamarine*, published in 2001 and later turned into a feature film. Two best friends cope with loss as Hailey's parents go through a divorce and Claire, who is learning to accept the death of both of her parents, prepares to move in with her grandparents far away from Hailey. The girls spend their last summer at a

soon-to-be-destroyed beach club and receive the help of a mermaid in coping with their separate futures. Reviewers were mostly positive. *New York Times Book Review* contributor Jan Benzel noted that the book is "a lovely introduction to the author's storytelling genius and matter-of-fact, lyrical style." Hazel Rochman, writing in *Booklist*, commented that "Hoffman's spare words reveal the magic and the gritty realism in daily life." In a *School Library Journal* review, De Lint noted that "Hoffman breathes full life into her characters; her prose is simple but gorgeous."

Written and published shortly after the September 11th terrorist attacks, *Green Angel* tells the story of an orphan who gives to others in the aftermath of a disaster. Green loses her parents in an apartment fire and becomes bitter toward life and the world around her. She eventually comes around, making new friends and caring for animals. A contributor to *Kirkus Reviews* wrote that readers "will be moved by the powerful imagery in Green's spare, haunting narrative." Jean Boreen, writing in the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, called the book "one of those wonderful stories that blend magical realism and metaphor to provide readers with much to consider about family, friendship, and finding one's identity after it has been stripped away."

In 2005 Hoffman penned the young adult book *The Foretelling*. In the story, Rain is a young girl who lives in a female-dominated Amazon community. She is shunned by her mother, the queen, because she is the product of rape. When her mother dies during the childbirth that she thought would bring her a new heir, Rain ascends to the throne and tries to protect the newborn son her mother left behind. "Many teens, particularly girls, will identify with Rain's self-doubt," noted Jennifer Mattson in *Booklist*. Claire Rosser, writing in *Kliatt*, stated that the story "holds the power of myth" and "examines what a society dominated by strong women would be like."

Incantation takes place in sixteenth-century Spain in the midst of the Inquisition. Teenage Estrella, who learns of her family's Jewish lineage, copes with the world around her when her jealous best friend turns the Inquisition on Estrella's family out of revenge. Estrella takes life as it comes, remembering from her childhood the mystical healings of the Kabbalah her grandfather taught her. Reviews of *Incantation* were mixed. Rochman, writing in *Booklist*, described Estrella's narrative as "intense." Reviewing the book in *Kliatt*, Myrna Marler noted that "Hoffman's signature lyricism is much in evidence but her prose is not as rich in detail as in her other books." Joanna Rudge Long, writing in *Horn Book*, called it "a powerfully told story of familial love and transcendence of the cruelest kind of experience."

Green Witch, the sequel to *Green Angel*, revisits Green a year after the cataclysmic events that left her family dead. Survivors like Green have assembled a small village and are struggling to get by. Those who keep to themselves are said to be witches, and Green is captivated by these outsiders. She also hopes to learn whether her school friend, Heather, is still alive, and she wants to know if Diamond, a mute boy she has fallen for, has survived. Her search for them leads her to an island prison, where Green encounters several old acquaintances. Critics applauded the sequel as a welcome reintroduction to Green and her struggles. For instance, a *Publishers Weekly* contributor called the novel "haunting, philosophical, and filled with poetic imagery." The contributor added that "this book will leave an indelible mark." In another laudatory critique, *Booklist* reviewer Gillian Engberg remarked that "teens will want to talk about everything here: the potent emotion and loss" and "the 9/11 parallels." Tracy Weiskind, writing in *School Library Journal*, proffered additional praise, observing that "Hoffman's spare language leads to a story sounding as if it were being told by a sage." A *Kirkus Reviews* writer recommended the story "for readers eager to be captured by a tale of sundered hearts rendered in lyrical prose."

Hoffman once told CA: "I suppose my main concern is the search for identity and continuity, and the struggle inherent in that search."

Related Information:

BOOKS

- *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, Volume 51, Gale (Detroit, MI), 1989.
- Hoffman, Alice, *The Third Angel*, Shaye Areheart (New York, NY), 2008.

PERIODICALS

- *AudioFile*, October-November, 2009, Archa Wachowicz, review of *The Story Sisters*, p. 39.
- *Best Sellers*, August, 1979, review of *The Drowning Season*, p. 158; June, 1982, review of *White Horses*, p. 89.
- *Book*, September, 1999, review of *Local Girls*, p. 81.
- *Booklist*, September 1, 1977, review of *Property Of*, p. 23; May 15, 1979, review of *The Drowning Season*, p. 1422; January 15, 1981, review of *Angel Landing*, p. 674; April 1, 1982, review of *White Horses*, p. 1006; February 15, 1985, review of *Fortune's Daughter*, p. 822; July, 1987, review of *Illumination Night*, p. 1650; May 15, 1988, review of *At Risk*, p. 1553; April 1, 1990, review of *Seventh Heaven*, p. 1505; March 15, 1991, review of *Seventh Heaven*, p. 1469; February 15, 1992, Donna Seaman, review of *Turtle Moon*, p. 1066; March 15, 1993, review of *Turtle Moon*, p. 1324; December 15, 1993, Donna Seaman, review of *Second Nature*, p. 723; March 15, 1995, Donna Seaman, review of *Practical Magic*, p. 1283; July, 1997, Donna Seaman, review of *Here on Earth*, p. 1774; March 15, 1999, Brad Hooper, review of *Local Girls*, p. 1259; June 1, 1999, review of *Here on Earth*, p. 1797; January 1, 2000, review of *Local Girls*, p. 819; March 15, 2000, review of *Local Girls*, p. 1340, Mary McCay, review of *Angel Landing*, p. 1396, and Mary McCay, review of *Practical Magic*, p. 1397; April 15, 2000, Donna Seaman, review of *The River King*, p. 1500; July, 2000, Barbara Baskin, review of *Illumination Night*, p. 2054; December 1, 2000, Connie Fletcher, review of *Horsefly*, p. 721; March 1, 2001, Hazel Rochman, review of *Aquamarine*, p. 1278; May 15, 2001, Donna Seaman, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 1707; September 15, 2001, Stephanie Zvirin, review of *Aquamarine*, p. 225; August, 2002, Gillian Engberg, review of *Indigo*, p. 1961; April 15, 2003, Gillian Engberg, review of *Green Angel*, p. 1462; May 15, 2004, Donna Seaman, review of *Blackbird House*, p. 1579; June 1, 2004, Ilene Cooper, review of *Moondog*, p. 1742; March 15, 2005, Donna Seaman, review of *The Ice Queen*, p. 1246; July, 2005, Jennifer Mattson, review of *The Foretelling*, p. 1916; September 1, 2006, Hazel Rochman, review of *Incantation*, p. 110; October 1, 2006, Donna Seaman, review of *Skylight Confessions*, p. 4; April 1, 2007, Candace Smith, review of *Skylight Confessions*, p. 85; December 1, 2007, Donna Seaman, review of *The Third Angel*, p. 5; August 1, 2008, Joyce Saricks, review of *The Third Angel*, p. 86; April 1, 2009, Donna Seaman, review of *The Story Sisters*, p. 5; September 15, 2009, Joyce Saricks, review of *The Story Sisters*, p. 72; January 1, 2010, Gillian Engberg, review of *Green Witch*, p. 67; October 1, 2010, Donna Seaman, review of *The Red Garden*, p. 30; May 15, 2011, Joanne Wilkinson, review of *The Dovekeepers*, p. 23; September 1, 2013, Donna Seaman, review of *Survival Lessons*, p. 22; December 15, 2013, Donna Seaman, review of *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*, p. 20.
- *BookPage*, August, 2002, review of *Indigo*, p. 30; March, 2003, review of *Green Angel*, p. 28.
- *Books*, November, 1988, review of *At Risk*, p. 21; December, 1997, review of *Here on Earth*, p. 19; December 3, 2006, Mary Harris Russell, review of *Incantation*, p. 7.
- *Books for Keeps*, July, 2003, review of *Green Angel*, p. 26.
- *Book World*, December 21, 1980, review of *Angel Landing*, p. 4; May 19, 1985, review of *Fortune's Daughter*, p. 11; August 2, 1987, review of *Illumination Night*, p. 13; April 19, 1992, review of *Turtle Moon*, p. 7; January 30, 1994, review of *Second Nature*, p. 2; June 4, 1995, review of *Practical Magic*, p. 8; July 11, 1999, review of *Local Girls*, p. 5; February 20, 2000, review of *The River King*, p. 3; July 29, 2001, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 10.
- *Boston*, September, 1982, Lee Grove, review of *White Horses*, p. 84; April, 1985, Lee Grove, review of *Fortune's Daughter*, p. 87; January, 2007, Courtney Cox, review of *Skylight Confessions*, p. 26.
- *Boston Globe*, (Toronto, Ontario, Canada), February 25, 2014, Jan Stuart, review of *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*.
- *Boston Review*, September, 1985, review of *Fortune's Daughter*, p. 25; October, 1987, review of *Illumination Night*, p. 31; April, 1995, review of *Practical Magic*, p. 32.
- *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*, January, 2007, Hope Morrison, review of *Incantation*, p. 217.
- *California*, October, 1990, Greil Marcus, review of *Seventh Heaven*, p. 143.
- *Center for Children's Books Bulletin*, February, 2001, review of *Aquamarine*, p. 224; June, 2002, review of *Indigo*, p. 367; April, 2003, review of *Green Angel*, p. 316.
- *Childhood Education*, fall, 2002, Theresa Stahler, review of *Indigo*, p. 51.
- *Children's Book Review Service*, September, 2000, review of *Horsefly*, p. 7.
- *Children's Bookwatch*, November, 1997, review of *Fireflies*, p. 4; December, 1999, review of *Fireflies*, p. 4; June, 2002, review of *Indigo*, p. 3.

- *Christian Science Monitor*, July 15, 1988, review of *At Risk*, p. 20; March 14, 1994, Merle Rubin, review of *Second Nature*; June 3, 1999, review of *Local Girls*, p. 21; July 13, 2000, review of *The River King*, p. 18; August 2, 2001, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 17; August 30, 2010, Marc LeBlanc, review of *The Third Angel*.
- *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 25, 1979, review of *The Drowning Season*.
- *Contemporary Review*, July, 1978, review of *Property Of*, p. 45; October, 1988, review of *At Risk*, p. 217.
- *Cosmopolitan*, August, 1990, Louise Bernikow, review of *Seventh Heaven*, p. 24; September, 1991, Louise Bernikow, review of *Seventh Heaven*, p. 52; May, 1992, Louise Bernikow, review of *Turtle Moon*, p. 44; February, 1994, Chris Chase, review of *Second Nature*, p. 36.
- *Detroit Free Press*, August 19, 2001, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 4E.
- *Detroit News*, September 5, 1990, Alice Vachss, review of *Seventh Heaven*.
- *Economist*, April 19, 2008, "A Tale of Three Women; New Fiction," p. 103.
- *Entertainment Weekly*, October 23, 1998, review of film *Practical Magic*, p. 47; August 4, 2000, George Hodgman, "Alice's Wonders," p. 78; June 27, 2003, Amy Feitelberg, review of *The Probable Future*, p. 142; July 23, 2004, Henry Goldblatt, review of *Blackbird House*, p. 81.
- *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, August 6, 2001, "Hoffman's 'Diary' Examines a Secret Past"; September 7, 2001, review of *Blue Diary*.
- *Girls' Life*, June 1, 2001, Kim Childress, review of *Aquamarine*, p. 38.
- *Globe & Mail* (Toronto, Ontario, Canada), November 28, 2011, Nancy Richler, review of *The Dovekeepers*, p. R4.
- *Guardian* (London, England), January 6, 2007, Anna Shapiro, "Moody Blues," review of *Skylight Confessions*.
- *Hartford Courant*, January 7, 2007, "A Modern Fabler: Alice Hoffman Faces Her 'Deepest Fear' in Latest Fairy Tale."
- *Horn Book*, March-April, 2003, Lauren Adams, review of *Green Angel*, p. 211; September-October, 2005, Anita L. Burkam, review of *The Foretelling*, p. 580; November-December, 2006, Joanna Rudge Long, review of *Incantation*, p. 713.
- *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, November 1, 2003, Jean Boreen, review of *Green Angel*, pp. 271-273; March 1, 2007, Justin Childress, review of *Incantation*, p. 507.
- *Kirkus Reviews*, September 1, 1997, review of *Fireflies*; January 1, 2003, review of *Green Angel*, p. 61; March 15, 2003, review of *The Probable Future*, p. 418; May 15, 2004, review of *Blackbird House*, p. 461; July 1, 2004, review of *Moondog*, p. 631; September 15, 2006, review of *Skylight Confessions*, p. 924, and review of *Incantation*, p. 955; January 15, 2008, review of *The Third Angel*; April 15, 2009, review of *The Story Sisters*; January 15, 2010, review of *Green Witch*; October 15, 2010, review of *The Red Garden*; April 15, 2013, review of *Survival Lessons*; February 1, 2014, review of *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*.
- *Kliatt*, May 1, 2002, Paula Rohrlack, review of *Indigo*, p. 10; January 1, 2003, review of *Green Angel*, p. 8; July, 2003, Lesley S.J. Farmer, "Water Tales, Two Novels; Aquamarine and Indigo," p. 32; July 1, 2004, Janet Julian, review of *The Probable Future*, p. 19; September 1, 2004, Paula Rohrlack, review of *Green Angel*, p. 30; September, 2005, Claire Rosser, review of *The Foretelling*; September 1, 2006, Myrna Marler, review of *Incantation*, p. 13.
- *Library Journal*, May 15, 1999, Barbara Hoffert, review of *Local Girls*, p. 130; December, 1999, Rochelle Ratner, review of *Local Girls*, p. 205; April 1, 2000, Joyce Kessel, review of *Angel Landing*, p. 150; May 15, 2000, Reba Leiding, review of *The River King*, p. 124; May 1, 2002, Andrea Tarr, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 160; March 15, 2003, Starr E. Smith, review of *The Probable Future*, p. 114; October 1, 2006, Beth E. Andersen, review of *Skylight Confessions*, p. 58; February 15, 2008, Nanci Milone Hill, review of *The Third Angel*, p. 92; May 1, 2009, Keddy Ann Outlaw, review of *The Story Sisters*, p. 70; October 1, 2010, Jeanne Bogino, review of *The Red Garden*, p. 71; October 15, 2010, review of *The Red Garden*, p. 3; January 1, 2014, Leslie Patterson, review of *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*, p. 98.
- *Library Media Connection*, April 1, 2003, review of *Green Angel*, p. 76; April-May, 2006, Sheery York, review of *The Foretelling*, p. 70; March-April, 2010, Patricia Brown, review of *Green Witch*, p. 71; June 15, 2011, Leslie Patterson, review of *The Dovekeepers*, p. 77.
- *London Review of Books*, August 6, 1992, "Turtle Moon," p. 19.

- *Los Angeles Times*, May 9, 1985, Carolyn See, review of *Fortune's Daughter*, p. 46; July 20, 2003, review of *The Probable Future*, p. 7.
- *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, August 19, 1979, Barry Siegel, review of *The Drowning Season*.
- *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, February 1, 2002, Charles De Lint, review of *Aquamarine*, p. 37; December 1, 2003, Charles De Lint, review of *Green Angel*, p. 24; October-November, 2005, Charles De Lint, review of *The Ice Queen*, p. 52.
- *MBR Bookwatch*, January, 2008, Maya Landers, review of *Incantation*.
- *Miami Herald*, August 17, 2001, Connie Ogle, review of *Blue Diary*; January 24, 2007, review of *Skylight Confessions*.
- *Midwest Bookwatch*, March 1, 2007, review of *Skylight Confessions*.
- *Ms.*, August, 1979, Margo Jefferson, review of *The Drowning Season*; spring, 2005, Valerie Miner, review of *The Ice Queen*, p. 90.
- *Nation*, November 26, 1990, Melissa Pritchard, review of *Seventh Heaven*, p. 650.
- *New Leader*, May 1, 2003, review of *The Probable Future*, p. 36.
- *Newsweek*, May 23, 1977, review of *Property Of*, p. 87; April 12, 1982, Peter S. Prescott, review of *White Horses*, p. 82; August 1, 1988, Laura Shapiro, review of *At Risk*, p. 52; August 20, 1990, review of *Seventh Heaven*, p. 62.
- *New Yorker*, May 3, 1982, review of *White Horses*, p. 165; July 27, 1992, review of *Turtle Moon*, p. 72; April 11, 1994, review of *Second Nature*, p. 99.
- *New York Times*, July 14, 1977, Richard R. Lingeman, review of *Property Of*, p. 16; July 25, 1987, Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, review of *Illumination Night*; August 10, 1990, review of *Seventh Heaven*, p. B2; April 21, 1992, Michiko Kakutani, review of *Turtle Moon*, p. B2; February 10, 1994, Ruth Reichl, "At Home with Alice Hoffman: A Writer Set Free by Magic"; February 24, 1994, Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, review of *Second Nature*, p. B2; December 2, 2001, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 63; January 7, 2007, Marcelle S. Fischler, "People Who Live," p. 9.
- *New York Times Book Review*, November 9, 1980, Larry McMurtry, review of *Angel Landing*, p. 14; March 28, 1982, Anne Tyler, review of *White Horses*, p. 11; March 24, 1985, Perri Klass, review of *Fortune's Daughter*, p. 7; August 9, 1987, Gwyneth Cravens, review of *Illumination Night*, p. 7; July 17, 1988; August 5, 1990, Alida Becker, review of *Seventh Heaven*, p. 2, and review of *At Risk*, p. 7; April 26, 1992, Frederick Busch, review of *Turtle Moon*; February 6, 1994, Howard Frank Mosher, review of *Second Nature*, p. 13; June 25, 1995, Mark Childress, review of *Practical Magic*, p. 25; September 14, 1997, Karen Karbo, review of *Here on Earth*; June 13, 1999, Sarah Ferguson, review of *Local Girls*, p. 31; July 16, 2000, Amanda Fortini, review of *The River King*, p. 12; June 3, 2001, Jan Benzel, review of *Aquamarine*, p. 49; August 5, 2001, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 22; August 4, 2002, Scott Veale, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 20; December 8, 2002, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 80; July 6, 2003, Janice P. Nimura, review of *The Probable Future*, p. 26; February 4, 2007, Louisa Thomas, review of *Skylight Confessions*, p. 18; May 18, 2008, Polly Morrice, "Parallel Misfortunes," review of *The Third Angel*, p. 11; February 28, 2014, Katharine Weber, review of *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*.
- *Orlando Sentinel*, August 2, 2000, Nancy Pate, review of *The River King*.
- *People*, September 3, 1990, Ralph Novak, review of *Seventh Heaven*; July 3, 1995, Meg Cohen Ragas, review of *Practical Magic*, p. 31; August 14, 2000, review of *The River King*, p. 14; July 26, 2004, Ellen Shapiro, review of *Blackbird House*, p. 47; May 9, 2005, Amy Waldman, review of *The Ice Queen*, p. 51; January 29, 2007, Michelle Green, review of *Skylight Confessions*, p. 57.
- *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, April 20, 2008, Sharon Eberson, review of *The Third Angel*.
- *Ploughshares*, fall, 2003, Maryanne O'Hara, "About Alice Hoffman: A Profile by Maryanne O'Hara," pp. 194-198.
- *Publishers Weekly*, June 1, 1990, Sybil Steinberg, review of *Seventh Heaven*, p. 48; February 3, 1992, review of *Turtle Moon*, p. 61; November 29, 1993, review of *Second Nature*, p. 53; March 20, 1995, review of *Practical Magic*, p. 40; September 15, 1997, review of *Fireflies*, p. 76; May 3, 1999, review of *Local Girls*, p. 1259; June 5, 2000, review of *The River King*, p. 71; July 31, 2000, Daisy Maryles, "Women, Women, Women," p. 21; August 14, 2000, review of *Horsefly*, p. 355; February 19, 2001, review of *Aquamarine*, p. 92; June 4, 2001, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 54; March 11, 2002, review of *Indigo*, p. 73; April 22, 2002, review of *Aquamarine*, p. 73; January 6, 2003, review of *Green Angel*, p. 60; May 15, 2003, review of *The Probable Future*, p. 196; November 10,

- 2003, review of *Green Angel*, p. 37; June 21, 2004, review of *Blackbird House*, p. 42; August 9, 2004, review of *Moondog*, p. 248; October 16, 2006, review of *Incantation*, p. 54; November 6, 2006, review of *Skylight Confessions*, p. 37; December 17, 2007, review of *The Third Angel*, p. 28; March 30, 2009, review of *The Story Sisters*, p. 26; February 22, 2010, review of *Green Witch*, p. 69; October 4, 2010, review of *The Red Garden*, p. 25; December 20, 2010, Jessilyn Norcross, review of *The Red Garden*, p. 4; November 18, 2013, review of *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*, p. 29.
- *Redbook*, July, 1999, Rose Martelli, review of *Local Girls*, p. G1; April, 2008, review of *The Third Angel*, p. 44.
 - *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver, CO), April 18, 2008, Ashley Simpson Shires, review of *The Third Angel*.
 - *Sacramento Bee*, January 29, 2007, "Practically Magic."
 - *St. Louis Dispatch*, April 13, 2008, Gail Pennington, review of *The Third Angel*.
 - *Savvy Woman*, July-August, 1990, Francine Prose, review of *Seventh Heaven*, p. 20.
 - *School Librarian*, winter, 2003, review of *Green Angel*; autumn, 2007, Sandra Bennett, review of *Incantation*, p. 159.
 - *School Library Journal*, November 1, 1997, Patricia Manning, review of *Fireflies*, p. 83; October, 2000, Louise L. Sherman, review of *Horsefly*, p. 127; March, 2001, Patricia A. Dollisch, review of *Aquamarine*, p. 250; August, 2002, Farida S. Dowler, review of *Indigo*, p. 188; March, 2003, Renee Steinberg, review of *Green Angel*, p. 234; July, 2003, Pam Johnson, review of *The Probable Future*, p. 152; December, 2003, review of *The Probable Future*, p. 51; April, 2004, review of *Green Angel*, p. 64; October, 2004, Maria B. Salvatore, review of *Moondog*, p. 118; September, 2005, Sandy Freund, review of *The Ice Queen*, p. 244; December, 2006, Renee Steinberg, review of *Incantation*, p. 144; March, 2007, Francisca Goldsmith, review of *Incantation*, p. 79; April, 2007, review of *Incantation*, p. 66; May, 2010, Tracy Weiskind, review of *Green Witch*, p. 116.
 - *Seattle Times*, April 25, 2008, Melinda Bargreen, review of *The Third Angel*.
 - *Time*, July 18, 1988, R.Z. Sheppard, review of *At Risk*, p. 68.
 - *Times* (London, England), November 28, 1985; October 1, 1987, Philip Howard, review of *Illumination Night*; October 1, 1988, Catherine Bennett, review of *At Risk*.
 - *Times Educational Supplement* (London, England), July 18, 2003, review of *Aquamarine*, p. 29; July 18, 2003, review of *Green Angel*, p. 29; September 5, 2003, review of *The Probable Future*, p. 17.
 - *Times Literary Supplement* (London, England), April 21, 1978, Zachary Leader, review of *Property Of*, p. 432; March 11, 1988, review of *Illumination Night*, p. 276; March 25, 1994, review of *Second Nature*, p. 21; July 5, 1996, Lorna Sage, review of *Practical Magic*, p. 23; September 14, 2001, Juliet Fleming, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 22; August 22, 2003, Sarah Churchwell, "Flights of the Sparrow Women: Alice Hoffman's Brand of New England Magic," p. 17.
 - *Toronto Star* (Toronto, Ontario, Canada), February 25, 2014, Deborah Dundas, review of *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*.
 - *Tribune Books* (Chicago, IL), June 26, 1988, Michele Souda, review of *At Risk*; August 5, 1990; April 26, 1992, p. 6; February 20, 1994; August 6, 1995; September 30, 2001, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 2; August 4, 2002, review of *Blue Diary*, p. 6; December 7, 2003, review of *Green Angel*, p. 5.
 - *USA Today*, April 10, 2008, Patty Rhule, "Lost Love Takes Wing in *The Third Angel*," p. 6; February 17, 2014, Patty Rhule, review of *The Museum of Extraordinary Things*.
 - *Voice of Youth Advocates*, April 1, 2001, review of *Aquamarine*, p. 52; August 1, 2002, review of *Indigo*, p. 202; April 1, 2003, review of *Green Angel*, p. 51; December 1, 2006, Ruth Cox Clark, review of *Incantation*, p. 442; April, 2011, review of *Green Witch*, p. 9.
 - *Washington Post*, August 2, 1979, Susan Wood, review of *The Drowning Season*; April 13, 1982, Stephanie Vaughn, review of *White Horses*; June 29, 1988, Jonathan Yardley, review of *At Risk*.
 - *Washington Post Book World*, August 2, 1987, Jack Sullivan, review of *Illumination Night*.
 - *WWD*, January 9, 2007, Vanessa Lawrence, "Dream Weaver," p. 4.
 - *Yale Review*, winter, 1978, Edith Milton, review of *Property Of*.

ONLINE

- *Alice Hoffman Home Page*, <http://www.alicehoffman.com> (February 1, 2012).

- *BookBrowse.com*, <http://www.bookbrowse.com/> (August 25, 2004), author profile.
- *BookLoons*, <http://www.bookloons.com/> (March 4, 2009), Lyn Seippel, review of *Skylight Confessions*.
- *BookPage*, <http://www.bookpage.com/> (August 6, 2004), Ellen Kanner, "Making Believe: Alice Hoffman Takes Her *Practical Magic* to the River."
- *Bookreporter.com*, <http://www.bookreporter.com/> (August 6, 2004), interview with Hoffman; (March 4, 2009), Norah Piehl, review of *Skylight Confessions*, and Kate Ayers, review of *The Third Angel*; (October 6, 2011), Roberta O'Hara, review of *The Dovekeepers*.
- *Bookreview.com*, <http://www.bookreview.com/> (March 4, 2009), Harriet Klausner, review of *Skylight Confessions*.
- *Curled Up with a Good Book*, <http://www.curledup.com/> (March 4, 2009), Michael Leonard, review of *Skylight Confessions* and *The Third Angel*.
- *Guardian Online*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/> (November 4, 2011), Clare Clark, "Alice Hoffman's Judean Rebels Head for Their Desert Fortress," review of *The Dovekeepers*.
- *Independent Online*, <http://www.independent.co.uk/> (October 9, 2011), Leslie McDowell, review of *The Dovekeepers*.
- *Jewish Chronicle*, <http://www.thejc.com/> (November 30, 2011), Simon Round, author interview.
- *Kim Antieau Blog*, <http://www.kimantieau.com/> (April 24, 2008), Kim Antieau, "Interview with Alice Hoffman."
- *Mostly Fiction Book Reviews*, <http://www.mostlyfiction.com/> (March 4, 2009), biography of author.
- *New York Times Book Review*, <http://www.nytimes.com/> (October 21, 2011), Sarah Fay, "The Women of Masada," review of *The Dovekeepers*.
- *Red Room*, <http://redroom.com/> (February 1, 2004), author biography.
- *Romance Reader*, <http://www.romancereader.com/> (August 6, 2004), Susan Scribner, review of *Practical Magic*.
- *Telegraph Online*, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/> (January 3, 2007), Laura Barnett, "Disregard Time and Sorrow and all the Damage Done," review of *Skylight Confessions*.
- *Washington Post Book World*, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/> (October 5, 2011), Ron Charles, "Alice Hoffman's *Dovekeepers* Builds on Lives of Jewish Heroines."*

Source: *Contemporary Authors Online*, 2015

Gale Database: Contemporary Authors Online

Gale Document Number: GALE|H13705948

Source Citation: " Alice Hoffman." 2015. *Books & Authors*. Gale. Gale Internal User 24 Aug

2016 <<http://bna.galegroup.com/bna/start.do?p=BNA&u=gale>>

©2015 Cengage Learning