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DECLARATION

This is to certify that the thesis entitled *The select novels of Joyce Carol Oates – A Study*, submitted by me, is a research work done during 2002-2002 under the supervision of Dr. T.M.J. Indra Mohan, Professor, Department of English, Pachaiyappa’s College, and that the thesis has not previously formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship or other similar title.

I also certify that this thesis represents complete independent work on my part.

R.S. SHANTHARAHM
PREFACE

Arguments over the selection of trilogy alone, of course, could be raised. It is to emphasise that the chosen novels are the most important of Oates' works and that they set goals to the possibilities of the thematic concerns. The point focused in the study is that the trilogy deals with the singular aspects of violence and the causative factors of violent sequences in the American society after the second world war. The discussion helps clarify the importance of other novels of Oates. The present study seeks to establish certain socio-economic factors which the author chooses as her raw material for her works. This includes geographical distribution, chronological sequence and chronological spacing which operate in the trilogy and is constructed with an interpretative context. The trilogy substantiates the sense of psychological pluralism which produces a feeling of vulnerability and helplessness. In consequence, what we witness in the novels of Oates is violence and frustration with which the present American society is structured.
Chapter – I

The first chapter introduces the background of the author—her social, literary, political and family aspects. It also elaborates the influence of the Second World War on the social, political, religious and literary aspects of the era. The contribution of the contemporary authors is discussed here. The Chapter describes various influences affecting Joyce Carol Oates. It deals with her pet themes and obsessions. The chapter deals with her exercise in the field of family and her future vision. It discusses her handling of the genre as well as her painstaking work, the trilogy – *A Garden of Earthly Delights, Expensive People* and *them*.

Chapter – II

This Chapter titled, ‘An Over View’ deals with the brief biography of Joyce Carol Oates. It also deals with the efforts she had taken to combine teaching in the College and University and the much effort requiring assignment of writing novels, short stories, poems, criticism, essays, plays and other literary
assignments. The chapter analyses her trilogy and it’s significance in the American fiction.

Chapter – III

This Chapter titled, ‘Conception and Creativity’ discusses threadbare and in an analytical style the trilogy – *A Garden of Earthly Delights* (1967), *The Expensive People* (1968), and *them* (1969). Through these novels she proves her commitment to social causes and her concern for human values. The novels are used for mirroring the superficiality of material comforts, free-floating attitude of the urban inhabitants and the need to shun violence.

Chapter – IV

The Chapter titled, ‘The Violent Vision’ proposes to discuss the themes, problems and commitments of Trilogy. It also portrays the social, cultural, moral and religious events. The degradation of feminine values are also found to be lashed at. The spiritual and intellectual decline as well are discussed in depth. We see as to
how the trilogy focuses on the condition of alienation and depression, which dislodges the characters from paternal roots.

Chapter – V

The concluding chapter titled, ‘A Female Power-House,’ clarifies her dealing with the common American obsession and the transcendence achieved by various characters. The hopes and frustrations of the society of America, are exhaustively dealt with in this chapter. The chapter successfully proves the dynamism and the various talents of Joyce Carol Oates.
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