

## Press Release



# The Best American Essays 2001

Edited by Kathleen Norris and Robert Atwan

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"An essay, after all, is merely an attempt. It has no presumption of success and no ulterior or utilitarian purpose, which makes it unique, a welcome open space in the crowded, busy landscape of American life. A place to relax and take a breather." — Kathleen Norris, in her introduction to *The Best American Essays 2001*

## Introduction

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Relax, take a breather, and dip into *The Best American Essays 2001*, chosen by the best-selling, award-winning writer Kathleen Norris.

This year's collection includes the work of Diane Ackerman, Anne Fadiman, Stephen King, Mary Oliver, Reynolds Price, Edward Hoagland, and Francine du Plessix Gray, among other literary lights. The pieces — all of which demonstrate "an awareness of craft and forcefulness of thought," according to series editor Robert Atwan — were originally published in periodicals ranging from *The New Yorker* to *The Georgia Review*, from *Esquire* to *The American Scholar*.

"In the essays in this book we are invited to take time to notice how the world goes on, and how often it is the simple things — a student's letter, the

memory of a first job, the markings left in a library book, an old friend's recipe for yellow pepper soup, or a glimpse of night sky — that allow us to dwell on the issues of life and death that concern us all," Norris writes.

## About the Editors

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Series editor **Robert Atwan** has edited several literary anthologies and has written essays for periodicals nationwide. He has served as the series editor for *The Best American Essays* since it was launched in 1986.

**Kathleen Norris** is the author of *Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith*, *The Cloister Walk*, and *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography*. Her poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, in various anthologies, and in her own three volumes of poetry. Her most recent book is *The Virgin of Bennington*, a memoir.

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