



PETER
CAREY

Twice winner of The Booker Prize

OSCAR & LUCINDA



The Best of the Booker

Readers' Guides

Oscar and Lucinda by Peter Carey

Publisher Faber and Faber
Paperback RRP £8.99

Winning year 1988

Other shortlisted titles in 1988

Bruce Chatwin – *Utz*

Penelope Fitzgerald –

The Beginning of Spring

David Lodge – *Nice Work*

Salman Rushdie – *The Satanic Verses*

Mariner Warner – *The Lost Father*

1988 Judges

The Rt Hon Michael Foot (chair),

Sebastian Faulks; Philip French

Blake Morrison; Dr Rose Tremain



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About the author

Peter Carey was born in Australia in May 1943. He won the Booker Prize in 1988 for *Oscar and Lucinda* (which has since been made into a film starring Ralph Fiennes) and was shortlisted in 1985 with *Illywhacker*. He won The Man Booker Prize for the second time in 2001 with *True History of the Kelly Gang* and was nominated for the Man Booker International Prize in 2007. His other honours include the Commonwealth Writers' Prize and the Miles Franklin Literary Award. He now lives in New York City where he is the director of the Hunter College programme in creative writing.

Oscar and Lucinda

Oscar is a young English clergyman who has broken with his past and developed a disturbing talent for gambling. A country girl of singular ambition, Lucinda moves to Sydney, driven by dreams of self-reliance and the building of an industrial Utopia. Together this unlikely pair create and are created by the spectacle of mid-nineteenth century Australia.

Discussion points

- What are the similarities between Oscar and Lucinda's circumstances and characters?
- Would Lucinda be appreciated and understood better today than in her own lifetime?
- *Oscar and Lucinda* is filled with innuendo and insinuations and there is rarely a direct sentence. What effect does this indirect style have on the plot and your insight into the characters of Oscar and Lucinda?
- Consider the turning points throughout the novel where Oscar and Lucinda had the chance to make different choices that could have led to a happy ending
- Mrs Williams has a compulsive need to brush her hair, what does this say about her character and why did Peter Carey chose this particular trait to demonstrate his point?

Other books by Peter Carey

Bliss; *Illywhacker*; *Oscar and Lucinda*; *The Tax Inspector*; *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith*; *Collected Stories*; *The Big Bazoochley*; *Jack Maggs*; *30 Days in Sydney: A Wildly Distorted Account*; *True History of the Kelly Gang*; *My Life as a Fake*; *Wrong about Japan*; *Theft: A Love Story*; *His Illegal Self*

Further Reading

Be Near Me – Andrew O'Hagan
Illywhacker – Peter Carey
The Tin Drum – Gunter Grass
The Riders – Tim Winton

Useful links

<http://www.petercareybooks.com/>
<http://books.guardian.co.uk/departments/generalfiction/story/0,6000,418708,00.html>
<http://www.faber.co.uk>
<http://www.themanbookerprize.com/prize/books/27>