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Patricia Highsmith



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Patricia Highsmith

Patricia Highsmith (January 19, 1921 - February 4, 1995) was an American novelist and short story writer best known for her [psychological thrillers](#), including her series of five novels based on the character of [Tom Ripley](#). She wrote 22 novels and numerous [short stories](#) throughout her career, and her work has led to more than two dozen film adaptations. Her writing derived influence from

Patricia Highsmith

existentialist literature, and interrogated notions of identity and popular morality. She was dubbed "the poet of apprehension" by novelist Graham Greene.

Her first novel, *Strangers on a Train*, has been adapted for stage and screen numerous times, notably by Alfred Hitchcock in 1951. Her 1955 novel *The Talented Mr. Ripley* has been adapted numerous times for film, theatre, and radio. Writing under the pseudonym "Claire Morgan," Highsmith published the first lesbian novel with a happy ending, *The Price of Salt*, republished 38 years later as *Carol* under her own name and later adapted into a 2015 film.

Early life

Highsmith was born **Mary Patricia Plangman** in Fort Worth, Texas. She was the only child of artists Jay Bernard Plangman (1889-1975), who was of German descent, and Mary Plangman (*née* Coates; September 13, 1895 - March 12, 1991). The couple divorced ten days before their daughter's birth.

In 1927, Highsmith, her mother and her adoptive stepfather, artist Stanley Highsmith, whom her mother had married in 1924, moved to New York City. When



Publicity photo from 1962

Born	Mary Patricia Plangman January 19, 1921 <u>Fort Worth, Texas</u> , U.S.
Died	February 4, 1995 (aged 74) <u>Locarno</u> , Switzerland
Pen name	
Occupation	<u>Novelist</u> , <u>short story writer</u>
Language	English
Nationality	American
Education	<u>Julia Richman High School</u>
Alma mater	<u>Barnard College</u>
Period	1942-1995
Genre	<u>Suspense</u> , <u>psychological thriller</u> , <u>crime fiction</u> , <u>romance</u>
Literary movement	<u>Modernist literature</u>
Notable works	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>Strangers on a Train</i></u>• <u><i>The Price of Salt</i></u> (aka <i>Carol</i>)• <u><i>The Blunderer</i></u>• <u><i>The Talented Mr. Ripley</i></u>• <u><i>Deep Water</i></u>• <u><i>The Cry of the Owl</i></u>

Signature

she was 12 years old, Highsmith was sent to Fort Worth and lived with her grandmother for a year. She called this the "saddest year" of her life and felt "abandoned" by her mother. She returned to New York to continue living with her mother and stepfather, primarily in [Manhattan](#), but also in [Astoria, Queens](#).

According to Highsmith, her mother once told her that she had tried to [abort](#) her by drinking [turpentine](#), although a biography of Highsmith indicates Jay Plangman tried to persuade his wife to have the abortion but she refused. Highsmith never resolved this [love-hate relationship](#), which reportedly haunted her for the rest of her life, and which she fictionalized in "[The Terrapin](#)," her short story about a young boy who stabs his mother to death. Highsmith's mother predeceased her by only four years, dying at the age of 95.

Highsmith's grandmother taught her to read at an early age, and she made good use of her grandmother's extensive library. At the age of nine, she found a resemblance to her own imaginative life in the case histories of *The Human Mind* by [Karl Menninger](#), a popularizer of [Freudian](#) analysis.

Many of Highsmith's 22 novels were set in [Greenwich Village](#), where she lived at 48 Grove Street from 1940 to 1942, before moving to 345 E. 57th Street. In 1942, Highsmith graduated from [Barnard College](#), where she studied [English composition](#), [playwriting](#), and [short story](#) prose. After graduating from college, and despite endorsements from "highly placed professionals," she applied without success for a job at publications such as [Harper's Bazaar](#), [Vogue](#), [Mademoiselle](#), [Good Housekeeping](#), [Time](#), [Fortune](#), and [The New Yorker](#).

Based on the recommendation from [Truman Capote](#), Highsmith was accepted by the [Yaddo](#) artist's retreat during the summer of 1948, where she worked on her first novel, *Strangers on a Train*.

Personal life

Highsmith endured cycles of [depression](#), some of them deep, throughout her life. Despite literary success, she wrote in her diary of January 1970: "[I] am now cynical, fairly rich ... lonely, depressed, and totally pessimistic." Over the years, Highsmith suffered from [female hormone](#) deficiency, [anorexia nervosa](#), chronic [anemia](#), [Buerger's disease](#), and [lung cancer](#).

To all the
devils, lusts,
passions,

According to her biographer Andrew Wilson, Highsmith's personal life was a "troubled one." She was an [alcoholic](#) who, allegedly, never had an intimate relationship that

greeds, envys,
loves, hates,
strange
desires,
enemies
ghostly and
real, the army of
memories, with
which I do
battle -- may
they never give
me peace.

- Patricia
Highsmith, "My
New Year's
Toast", journal
entry, 1947

lasted for more than a few years, and she was seen by some of her contemporaries and acquaintances as [misanthropic](#) and hostile. Her chronic alcoholism intensified as she grew older.

She famously preferred the company of animals to that of people and stated in a 1991 interview, "I choose to live alone because my imagination functions better when I don't have to speak with people."

[Otto Penzler](#), her U.S. publisher through his Penzler Books imprint, had met Highsmith in 1983, and four years later witnessed some of her theatrics intended to create havoc at dinner tables and shipwreck an evening. He said after her death that "[Highsmith] was a mean, cruel, hard, unlovable, unloving human being...I could never penetrate how any human being could be that relentlessly ugly.... But her books? Brilliant."

Other friends, publishers, and acquaintances held different views of Highsmith. Editor Gary Fisketjon, who published her later novels through [Knopf](#), said that "She was very rough, very difficult...But she was also plainspoken, dryly funny, and great fun to be around." Composer [David Diamond](#) met Highsmith in 1943 and described her as being "quite a depressed person--and I think people explain her by pulling out traits like cold and reserved, when in fact it all came from depression." [J. G. Ballard](#) said of Highsmith, "The author of *Strangers on a Train* and [The Talented Mr. Ripley](#) was every bit as deviant and quirky as her mischievous heroes, and didn't seem to mind if everyone knew it." [Screenwriter Phyllis Nagy](#), who adapted [The Price of Salt](#) into the 2015 film [Carol](#), met Highsmith in 1987 and the two remained friends for the rest of Highsmith's life. Nagy said that Highsmith was "very sweet" and "encouraging" to her as a young writer, as well as "wonderfully funny."

She was considered by some as "a lesbian with a [misogynist](#) streak." However, in his review of [Little Tales of Misogyny](#), [Nicholas Lezard](#) thought the accusations of misogyny to be without foundation.

Highsmith loved cats, and she bred about three hundred [snails](#) in her garden at home in [Suffolk, England](#). Highsmith once attended a London [cocktail party](#) with a "gigantic handbag" that "contained a head of lettuce and a hundred snails" which she said were her "companions for the evening."

She loved [woodworking](#) tools and made several pieces of furniture.

Highsmith worked without stopping. In later life, she became stooped, with an [osteoporotic](#) hump. Though the 22 novels and 8 books of short stories she wrote were highly acclaimed, especially outside of the United States, Highsmith preferred her personal life to remain private.

A lifelong diarist, Highsmith left behind eight thousand pages of handwritten notebooks and diaries.

She never married or had children.

Sexuality

Patricia Highsmith was sexually attracted to women only and her sexual relationships were primarily with them. When younger, she occasionally engaged in sex with men without physical desire for them, and wrote in her diary: "The male face doesn't attract me, isn't *beautiful* to me." She told writer [Marijane Meaker](#) in the late 1950s that she had "*tried* to like men. I like most men better than I like women, but not in bed." In a 1970 letter to her stepfather Stanley, Highsmith described sexual encounters with men as "steel wool in the face, a sensation of being raped in the wrong place-- leading to a sensation of having to have, pretty soon, a bowel [*sic*] movement." Stressing, "If these words are unpleasant to read, I can assure you it is a little more unpleasant in bed." Phyllis Nagy described Highsmith as "a lesbian who did not very much enjoy being around other women" and the few sexual dabbles she'd had with men occurred just to "see if she could be into men in that way because she so much more preferred their company."

In 1943, Highsmith had an affair with artist Allela Cornell who, despondent over [unrequited love](#) from another woman, committed suicide in 1946 by drinking [nitric acid](#).

During her stay at Yaddo, Highsmith met writer Marc Brandel, son of author [J.D. Beresford](#). Even though she told him about her [homosexuality](#), they soon entered into a short-lived relationship. He convinced her to visit him in [Provincetown, Massachusetts](#), where he introduced her to Ann Smith, a painter and designer with a previous *métier* as a *Vogue* fashion model, and the two became involved. After Smith left Provincetown, Highsmith felt she was "in prison" with Brandel and told him she was leaving. "[B]ecause of that I have to sleep with him, and only the fact that it is the last night strengthens me to bear it." Highsmith, who had never been sexually exclusive with Brandel, resented having sex with him. Highsmith temporarily broke off the relationship with Brandel and continued to be involved with several women, reuniting after the well-received publication of his new novel. Beginning November 30, 1948, and continuing for the next six months, Highsmith

underwent psychoanalysis in an effort "to regularize herself sexually" so she could marry Brandel. The analysis was brought to a stop by Highsmith, after which she ended her relationship with him.

After ending her engagement to Marc Brandel, she had an affair with psychoanalyst Kathryn Hamill Cohen, the wife of British publisher Dennis Cohen and founder of Cresset Press, which later published *Strangers on a Train*.

To help pay for the twice-a-week therapy sessions, Highsmith had taken a sales job during Christmas rush season in the toy section of Bloomingdale's department store. Ironically, it was during this attempt to "cure" her homosexuality that Highsmith was inspired to write her semi-autobiographical novel *The Price of Salt*, in which two women meet in a department store and begin a passionate affair.

In early September 1951, she began an affair with sociologist Ellen Blumenthal Hill, traveling back and forth to Europe to meet with her. When Highsmith and Hill came to New York in early May 1953, their affair ostensibly "in a fragile state," Highsmith began an "impossible" affair with the German homosexual photographer Rolf Tietgens, who had played a "sporadic, intense, and unconsummated role in her emotional life since 1943." She was reportedly attracted to Tietgens on account of his homosexuality, confiding that she felt with him "as if he is another girl, or a singularly innocent man." Tietgens shot several nude photographs of Highsmith, but only one has survived, torn in half at the waist so that only her upper body is visible. She dedicated *The Two Faces of January* (1964) to Tietgens.

Between 1959 and 1961, Highsmith was in love with author Marijane Meaker. Meaker wrote lesbian stories under the pseudonym "Ann Aldrich" and mystery/suspense fiction as "Vin Packer," and later wrote young adult fiction as "M.E. Kerr." In the late 1980s, after 27 years of separation, Highsmith began corresponding with Meaker again, and one day showed up on Meaker's doorstep, slightly drunk and ranting bitterly. Meaker later said she was horrified at how Highsmith's personality had changed.

Highsmith was attracted to women of privilege who expected their lovers to treat them with veneration. According to Phyllis Nagy, she belonged to a "very particular subset of lesbians" and described her conduct with many women she was interested in as being comparable to a movie "studio boss" who chased starlets. Many of these women, who to some extent belonged to the 'Carol Aird'-type and her social set, remained friendly with Highsmith and confirmed the stories of seduction.

An intensely private person, Highsmith was remarkably open and outspoken about her sexuality. She told Meaker: "the only difference between us and heterosexuals is what we do in bed."

Death

Patricia Highsmith, aged 74, died on February 4, 1995, from a combination of [aplastic anemia](#) and lung cancer at Carita hospital in [Locarno, Switzerland](#), near the village where she had lived since 1982. She was cremated at the cemetery in [Bellinzona](#); a memorial service was conducted in the Chiesa di Tegna in [Tegna, Ticino](#), Switzerland; and her ashes were interred in its columbarium.

She left her [estate](#), worth an estimated \$3 million, and the promise of any future royalties to the [Yaddo](#) colony, where she spent two months in 1948 writing the draft of *Strangers on a Train*. Highsmith bequeathed her [literary estate](#) to the [Swiss Literary Archives](#) at the [Swiss National Library](#) in Bern, Switzerland. Her Swiss publisher, [Diogenes Verlag](#), was appointed literary executor of the estate.

Religious, racial and ethnic views

Highsmith was a resolute atheist. Although she considered herself a [liberal](#), and in her school years had gotten along with [Black](#) students, in later years she became convinced that Blacks were responsible for the welfare crisis in America. She disliked Koreans because "they ate dogs".

From the beginning of the [occupation](#) of [Palestine](#) by [Israel](#), Highsmith was an active supporter of [Palestinian](#) rights, a stance which, according to *Carol* screenwriter [Phyllis Nagy](#), "often teetered into outright [antisemitism](#)." When she was living in Switzerland in the 1980s, she used nearly 40 aliases when writing to various government bodies and newspapers deploring the state of Israel and the "influence" of the Jews. Nevertheless, many of the women she became romantically involved with as well as friends she valued were Jewish, such as [Arthur Koestler](#), whom she met in October 1950 and with whom she had an unsuccessful affair designed to hide her homosexuality, believing that Marc Brandel's disclosure that she was homosexual would hurt her professionally. Moreover, [Saul Bellow](#), also Jewish, was a favorite author.

Politics

Highsmith described herself as a [social democrat](#). She believed in American democratic ideals and in "the promise" of U.S. history, but she was also highly critical of the reality of the country's 20th-century culture and [foreign policy](#).

Tales of Natural and Unnatural Catastrophes, her 1987 anthology of short stories, was notoriously [anti-American](#), and she often cast her homeland in a deeply unflattering light. Beginning in 1963, she resided exclusively in Europe. She retained her United States citizenship, despite the tax penalties, of which she complained bitterly while living for many years in France and Switzerland.

Israel

After Israel declared independence following the [1948 Palestine war](#) and [1948 Arab-Israeli War](#) it seized control of three-quarters of the [Palestine](#) territory, and Highsmith aligned herself with writers such as [Gore Vidal](#), [Alexander Cockburn](#), [Noam Chomsky](#) and [Edward Said](#) in supporting Palestinian self-determination. As a member of [Amnesty International](#), she felt duty-bound to express publicly her opposition to the displacement of Palestinians. Highsmith prohibited her books from being published in Israel after the election of [Menachem Begin](#) as Prime Minister in 1977. She dedicated her 1983 novel [People Who Knock on the Door](#) to the Palestinian people:

To the courage of the Palestinian people and their leaders in the struggle to regain a part of their homeland. This book has nothing to do with their problem.

The inscription was dropped from the U.S. edition with permission from her agent but without consent from Highsmith.

Highsmith contributed financially to the Jewish Committee on the Middle East, an organization founded in 1988 that represented American Jews who wanted the United States to "dissociate...from the policies of Israel." She wrote in an August 1993 letter to Marijane Meaker: "USA could save 11 million per day if they would cut the dough to Israel. The Jewish vote is 1%."

Writing history

Comic books

Before her short stories started appearing in print, Highsmith wrote for comic book publishers from 1942 and 1948, while she lived in New York City and Mexico. Answering an ad for "reporter/rewrite," she landed a job working for comic book publisher [Ned Pines](#) in a "bullpen" with four artists and three other writers. Initially scripting two comic-book stories a day for \$55-a-week

paychecks, Highsmith soon realized she could make more money by [freelance](#) writing for comics, a situation which enabled her to find time to work on her own short stories and live for a period in Mexico. The comic book scriptwriter job was the only long-term job Highsmith ever held.

From 1942-43, for the [Sangor-Pines](#) shop (Better/Cinema/Pines/Standard/Nedor), Highsmith wrote "Sergeant Bill King" stories and contributed to [Black Terror](#) and [Fighting Yank](#) comics; and wrote profiles such as [Catherine the Great](#), [Barney Ross](#), and [Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker](#) for the "Real Life Comics" series. From 1943-1946, under editor [Vincent Fago](#) at [Timely Comics](#), she contributed to its [U.S.A. Comics](#) wartime series, writing scenarios for comics such as [Jap Buster Johnson](#) and [The Destroyer](#). During these same years she wrote for [Fawcett Publications](#), scripting for [Fawcett Comics](#) characters "Crisco and Jasper" and others. Highsmith also wrote for Western Comics from 1945 to 1947.

When Highsmith wrote the psychological thriller novel [The Talented Mr. Ripley](#) (1955), one of the title character's first victims is a comic-book artist named Reddington: "Tom had a hunch about Reddington. He was a comic-book artist. He probably didn't know whether he was coming or going."

Early novels and short stories

Highsmith's first novel, [Strangers on a Train](#), proved modestly successful upon publication in 1950, and [Alfred Hitchcock's 1951 film adaptation](#) of the novel enhanced her reputation.

Highsmith's second novel, [The Price of Salt](#), was published in 1952 under the *nom de plume* [Claire Morgan](#). Highsmith mined her personal life for the novel's content. Its groundbreaking happy ending and departure from stereotypical conceptions about lesbians made it stand out in [lesbian fiction](#). In what [BBC 2's "The Late Show"](#) presenter [Sarah Dunant](#) described as a "literary coming out" after 38 years of disaffirmation, Highsmith finally acknowledged authorship of the novel publicly when she agreed to the 1990 publication by [Bloomsbury](#) retitled *Carol*. Highsmith wrote in the "Afterword" to the new edition:

If I were to write a novel about a lesbian relationship, would I then be labelled a lesbian-book writer? That was a possibility, even though I might never be inspired to write another such book in my life. So I decided to offer the book under another name.

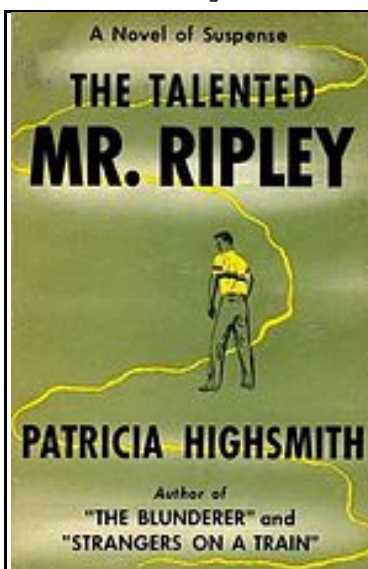
The appeal of *The Price of Salt* was that it had a happy ending for its two main characters, or at least they were going to try to have a future together. Prior to this book, homosexuals male and female in American novels had had to pay for their deviation by cutting their wrists, drowning themselves in a swimming pool, or by switching to heterosexuality (so it was stated), or by collapsing - alone and miserable and shunned - into a depression equal to hell.

The paperback version of the novel sold nearly one million copies before its 1990 reissue as *Carol*. *The Price of Salt* is distinct for also being the only one of Highsmith's novels in which no violent crime takes place, and where her characters have "more explicit sexual existences" and allowed "to find happiness in their relationship."

Her short stories appeared for the first time in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* in the early 1950s.

Her last novel, *Small g: a Summer Idyll*, was rejected by Knopf (her usual publisher by then) several months before her death, leaving Highsmith without an American publisher. It was published posthumously in the United Kingdom by Bloomsbury Publishing in March 1995, and nine years later in the United States by W.W. Norton.

The "Ripliad"



Cover of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1955).

In 1955, Highsmith wrote *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, a novel about Tom Ripley, a charming criminal who murders a rich man and steals his identity. Highsmith wrote four sequels: *Ripley Under Ground* (1970), *Ripley's Game* (1974), *The Boy Who Followed Ripley* (1980) and *Ripley Under Water* (1991), about Ripley's exploits as a con artist and serial killer who always gets away with his crimes. The series-- collectively dubbed "The Ripliad"--are some of Highsmith's most popular works and have sold millions of copies worldwide.

How was it possible to be afraid and in love, Therese thought. The two things did not go together. How was it possible to be afraid, when the two of them grew stronger together every day? And every night. Every night

The "suave, agreeable and utterly amoral" Ripley is Highsmith's most famous character, and has been critically acclaimed for being "both a likable character and a cold-blooded killer." He has typically been regarded as "cultivated," a "dapper [sociopath](#)," and an "agreeable and urbane [psychopath](#)."

Sam Jordison of [The Guardian](#) wrote, "It is near impossible, I would say, not to root for Tom Ripley. Not to like him. Not, on some level, to want him to win. Patricia Highsmith does a fine job of ensuring he wheedles his way into our sympathies." Film critic [Roger Ebert](#) made a similar appraisal of the character in his review of [Purple Noon](#), [Rene Clement](#)'s 1960 film adaptation of *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. "Ripley is a criminal of intelligence and cunning who gets away with murder. He's charming and literate, and a monster. It's insidious, the way Highsmith seduces us into identifying with him and sharing his selfishness; Ripley believes that getting his own way is worth whatever price anyone else might have to pay. We all have a little of that in us." Novelist [Sarah Waters](#) esteemed *The Talented Mr. Ripley* as the "one book I wish I'd written."

The first three books of the "Ripley" series have been adapted into films [five times](#). In 2015, [The Hollywood Reporter](#) announced that a group of production companies were planning a television series based on the novels. The series is currently in development.

Honors

- 1979 : Grand Master, [Swedish Crime Writers' Academy](#)
- 1987 : [Prix littéraire Lucien Barrière](#), [Festival du Cinéma Américain de Deauville](#)
- 1989 : [Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres](#), [French Ministry of Culture](#)
- 1991 : Candidate, [Nobel Prize in Literature](#)
- 1993 : Best Foreign Literary Award, Finnish Crime Society
- 2008 : Greatest Crime Writer, [The Times](#)

Awards and nominations

- 1946 : [O. Henry Award](#), Best First Story, for *The Heroine* (in [Harper's Bazaar](#))

was different, and every morning. Together they possessed a miracle. -[The Price of Salt](#) chapter eighteen ([Coward-McCann](#), 1952)

- 1951 : Nominee, [Edgar Allan Poe Award](#), Best First Novel, [Mystery Writers of America](#), for *Strangers on a Train*
- 1956 : Edgar Allan Poe Scroll (special award), Mystery Writers of America, for *The Talented Mr. Ripley*
- 1957 : [Grand Prix de Littérature Policière](#), International, for *The Talented Mr. Ripley*
- 1963 : Nominee, Edgar Allan Poe Award, Best Short Story, Mystery Writers of America, for *The Terrapin* (in [Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine](#))
- 1963 : Special Award, Mystery Writers of America, for *The Terrapin*
- 1964 : [Silver Dagger Award](#), Best Foreign Novel, [Crime Writers' Association](#), for *The Two Faces of January* (pub. [Heinemann](#))
- 1975 : [Prix de l'Humour noir Xavier Forneret](#) for *L'Amateur d'escargots* (pub. [Calmann-Lévy](#)) (English title: *Eleven*)

Bibliography

Novels

- [Strangers on a Train](#) (1950)
- [The Price of Salt](#) (1952) (as Claire Morgan) (republished as *Carol* in 1990 under Highsmith's name)
- [The Blunderer](#) (1954)
- [Deep Water](#) (1957)
- [A Game for the Living](#) (1958)
- [This Sweet Sickness](#) (1960)
- [The Cry of the Owl](#) (1962)
- [The Two Faces of January](#) (1964)
- [The Glass Cell](#) (1964)
- [A Suspension of Mercy](#) (1965) (published as *The Story-Teller* in the U.S.)
- [Those Who Walk Away](#) (1967)
- [The Tremor of Forgery](#) (1969)
- [A Dog's Ransom](#) (1972)

- *Edith's Diary* (1977)
- *People Who Knock on the Door* (1983)
- *Found in the Street* (1986)
- *Small g: a Summer Idyll* (1995)

The "Ripliad"

- *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1955)
- *Ripley Under Ground* (1970)
- *Ripley's Game* (1974)
- *The Boy Who Followed Ripley* (1980)
- *Ripley Under Water* (1991)

Short story collections

- *Eleven* (1970) (Foreword by Graham Greene) (published as *The Snail-Watcher and Other Stories* in the U.S.)
- *Little Tales of Misogyny* (1975) (published first as *Kleine Geschichtgen für Weiberfeinde* in Switzerland)
- *The Animal Lover's Book of Beastly Murder* (1975)
- *Slowly, Slowly in the Wind* (1979)
- *The Black House* (1981)
- *Mermaids on the Golf Course* (1985)
- *Tales of Natural and Unnatural Catastrophes* (1987)
- *Chillers* (1990)
- *Nothing That Meets the Eye: The Uncollected Stories* (2002) (published posthumously)

Other books

- *Miranda the Panda is on the Veranda* (1958) with Doris Sanders (children's book of verse and illustrations)
- *Plotting and Writing Suspense Fiction* (1966) (enlarged and revised edition, 1981)

Essays and articles

- "Not-Thinking with the Dishes" (1982), *Whodunit? A Guide to Crime*,

- "Scene of the Crime" (1989), [Granta](#), Issue No. 29, Winter

Miscellaneous

- "Introduction" (1977), *The World of Raymond Chandler*. Ed. [Miriam Gross](#), [Weidenfeld and Nicolson](#), [ISBN 0-297-77362-3](#)
- "Foreword" (1987), *Crime and Mystery: The 100 Best Books*. By H. R. F. Keating, Xanadu, [ISBN 0-947761-25-X](#)

Collected works

- *Mystery Cats III: More Feline Felonies* (1995) ([Signet Books](#), [ISBN 978-0451182937](#)) ([anthology](#) includes Patricia Highsmith)
- *The Selected Stories of Patricia Highsmith* (2001) ([W. W. Norton & Company](#), [ISBN 0-393-02031-2](#))
- *Patricia Highsmith: Selected Novels and Short Stories* (2011) (W. W. Norton & Company, [ISBN 978-0-393-08013-1](#))

Film, television, theatre and radio adaptations

Several of Highsmith's works have been adapted for other media, some more than once. In 1978, Highsmith was president of the jury at the [28th Berlin International Film Festival](#).

Film

- 1951. *Strangers on a Train* was adapted as a [film of same name](#) directed by [Alfred Hitchcock](#) starring [Farley Granger](#) as Guy Haines, [Robert Walker](#) as Anthony Bruno, [Ruth Roman](#) as Anne Morton, [Patricia Hitchcock](#) as Barbara Morton and [Laura Elliott](#) as Miriam Joyce Haines.
- 1963. *The Blunderer* was adapted as French-language film *Le meurtrier* ("The Murderer"), directed by [Claude Autant-Lara](#) starring [Maurice Ronet](#) as Walter Saccard, [Yvonne Furneaux](#) as Clara Saccard, [Gert Fröbe](#) as Melchior Kimmel, [Marina Vlady](#) as Ellie and [Robert Hossein](#) as Corbi. It is known in English as [Enough Rope](#).
- 1977. *This Sweet Sickness* was adapted as French-language film *Dites-lui que je l'aime*, directed by [Claude Miller](#) starring [Gérard Depardieu](#) as David Martineau, [Miou-Miou](#) as Juliette, [Dominique Laffin](#)

as Lise, and Jacques Denis as Gérard Dutilleux. It is known in English as *This Sweet Sickness*.

- 1978. *The Glass Cell* was adapted as German-language film *Die gläserne Zelle*, directed by Hans W. Geißendörfer starring Brigitte Fosse as Lisa Braun, Helmut Griem as Phillip Braun, Dieter Laser as David Reinelt and Walter Kohut as Robert Lasky.
- 1981. *Deep Water* was adapted as French-language film *Eaux profondes*, directed by Michel Deville starring Isabelle Huppert as Melanie and Jean-Louis Trintignant as Vic Allen.
- 1983. *Edith's Diary* was adapted as German-language film *Ediths Tagebuch*, directed by Hans W. Geißendörfer starring Angela Winkler as Edith.
- 1986. *The Two Faces of January* was adapted as German-language film *Die zwei Gesichter des Januars*, directed by Wolfgang Storch starring Charles Brauer as Chester McFarland, Yolanda Jilot as Colette McFarland and Thomas Schücke as Rydal Keener.
- 1987. *The Cry of the Owl* was adapted as French-language film *Le cri du hibou*, directed by Claude Chabrol starring Christophe Malavoy as Robert, Mathilda May as Juliette, Jacques Penot as Patrick and Virginie Thévenet as Véronique.
- 1987. The film version of *Strangers on a Train* by Alfred Hitchcock inspired the black comedy American film *Throw Momma from the Train*, directed by Danny DeVito.
- 1989. *The Story Teller* was adapted as German-language film *Der Geschichtenerzähler*, directed by Rainer Boldt starring Udo Schenk as Nico Thomkins and Anke Sevenich as Helen Thomkins.
- 2009. *The Cry of the Owl* was adapted as a film of same name, directed by Jamie Thraves starring Paddy Considine as Robert Forester and Julia Stiles as Jenny Thierolf.
- 2014. *The Two Faces of January* was adapted as a film of same name, written and directed by Hossein Amini starring Viggo Mortensen as Chester MacFarland, Kirsten Dunst as Colette MacFarland and Oscar Isaac as Rydal. It was released during the 64th Berlin International Film Festival.
- 2014. *A Mighty Nice Man* was adapted as a short film, directed by Jonathan Dee starring Kylie McVey as Charlotte, Jacqueline Baum as Emilie, Kristen Connolly as Charlotte's Mother, and Billy Magnussen as

Robbie.

- 2015. A film adaptation of *The Price of Salt*, titled *Carol*, was written by [Phyllis Nagy](#) and directed by [Todd Haynes](#), starring [Cate Blanchett](#) as Carol Aird and [Rooney Mara](#) as Therese Belivet.
- 2016. *The Blunderer* was adapted as *A Kind of Murder*, directed by [Andy Goddard](#) starring [Patrick Wilson](#) as Walter Stackhouse, [Jessica Biel](#) as Clara Stackhouse, [Eddie Marsan](#) as Marty Kimmel and [Haley Bennett](#) as Ellie Briess.

"Ripliad"

- 1960: *The Talented Mr. Ripley* was adapted as French-language film *Plein soleil* (titled *Purple Noon* for English-language audiences, though it translates as "Full Sun"). Directed by [René Clément](#) starring [Alain Delon](#) as Tom Ripley, [Maurice Ronet](#) as Philippe Greenleaf, and [Marie Laforêt](#) as Marge Duval. Both Highsmith and film critic [Roger Ebert](#) criticized the screenplay for altering the ending to prevent Ripley from going unpunished as he does in the novel.
- 1977: *Ripley's Game* (third novel) and a "plot fragment" of *Ripley Under Ground* (second novel) were adapted as German-language film *Der Amerikanische Freund* (*The American Friend*). Directed by [Wim Wenders](#) with [Dennis Hopper](#) as Ripley. Highsmith initially disliked the film but later found it stylish, although she did not like how Ripley was interpreted.
- 1999: *The Talented Mr. Ripley* was adapted as [an American production](#). Directed by [Anthony Minghella](#) with [Matt Damon](#) as Ripley, [Jude Law](#) as Dickie Greenleaf, and [Gwyneth Paltrow](#) as Marge Sherwood.
- 2002: *Ripley's Game* was adapted as a film [of same name](#) for an English-language Italian production. Directed by [Liliana Cavani](#) with [John Malkovich](#) as Ripley, [Chiara Caselli](#) as Luisa Harari Ripley, [Ray Winstone](#) as Reeves Minot, [Dougray Scott](#) as Jonathan Trevanny, and [Lena Headey](#) as Sarah Trevanny. Although not all reviews were favorable, Roger Ebert regarded it as the best of all the Ripley films.
- 2005: *Ripley Under Ground* was adapted as a film [of same name](#). Directed by [Roger Spottiswoode](#) with [Barry Pepper](#) as Ripley, [Jacinda Barrett](#) as Héloïse Plisson-Ripley, [Willem Dafoe](#) as Neil Murchison, and [Tom Wilkinson](#) as John Webster.

Television

- 1958. *Strangers on a Train* was adapted by [Warner Brothers](#) for an episode of the TV series *77 Sunset Strip*.
- 1982. Scenes from the Ripley novels were dramatized in the episode *A Gift for Murder* of *The South Bank Show*, with [Jonathan Kent](#) portraying Tom Ripley. The episode included an interview with Patricia Highsmith.
- 1983. *Deep Water* was adapted as a [miniseries](#) for German television as *Tiefe Wasser*, directed by [Franz Peter Wirth](#) starring Peter Bongartz as Vic van Allen, [Constanze Engelbrecht](#) as Melinda van Allen, [Reinhard Glemnitz](#) as Dirk Weisberg, [Raimund Harmstorf](#) as Anton Kameter, and [Sky du Mont](#) as Charley de Lisle.
- 1987. *The Cry of the Owl* was adapted for German television as *Der Schrei der Eule*, directed by Tom Toelle starring [Matthias Habich](#) as Robert Forster, Birgit Doll as Johanna Tierolf, [Jacques Breuer](#) as Karl Weick, Fritz Lichtenhahn as Inspektor Lippenholtz, and [Doris Kunstmann](#) as Vicky.
- 1990. The twelve episodes of the television series *Mistress of Suspense* are based on stories by Highsmith. The series aired first in France, then in the UK. It became available in the U.S. under the title *Chillers*.
- 1993. *The Tremor of Forgery* was adapted as German television film *Trip nach Tunis*, directed by Peter Goedel starring [David Hunt](#) as Howard Ingham, [Karen Sillas](#) as Ina Pallant and John Seitz as Francis J. Adams.
- 1995. *Little Tales of Misogyny* was adapted as Spanish/Catalan television film *Petits contes misògins*, directed by Pere Sagristà starring Marta Pérez, Carme Pla, Mamen Duch, and Míriam Iscla.
- 1996. *Strangers on a Train* was adapted for television as *Once You Meet a Stranger*, directed by [Tommy Lee Wallace](#) starring [Jacqueline Bisset](#) as Sheila Gaines ("Guy"), [Theresa Russell](#) as Margo Anthony ("Bruno") and [Celeste Holm](#) as Clara. The gender of the two lead characters was changed from male to female.
- 1996. *A Dog's Ransom* was adapted as French television film *La rançon du chien*, directed by [Peter Kassovitz](#) starring François Négret as César, [François Perrot](#) as Edouard Raynaud, [Daniel Prévost](#) as Max Ducasse and [Charlotte Valandrey](#) as Sophie.

Theatre

- 1998. *The Talented Mr. Ripley* was adapted for the stage as a [play](#) of same name by [playwright Phyllis Nagy](#). It was revived in 2010.
- 2013. *Strangers on a Train* was adapted as a play [of same name](#) by playwright [Craig Warner](#).

Radio

- 2002. A four-episode [radio drama](#) of *The Cry of the Owl* was broadcast by [BBC Radio 4](#), with [voice acting](#) by [John Sharian](#) as Robert Forester, Joanne McQuinn as Jenny Theirolf, [Adrian Lester](#) as Greg Wyncoop, and [Matt Rippy](#) as Jack Neilsen.
- 2009. All five books of the "Ripliad" were [dramatized](#) by BBC Radio 4, with [Ian Hart](#) voicing Tom Ripley.
- 2014. A five-segment dramatization of *Carol* (aka *The Price of Salt*) was broadcast by BBC Radio 4, with voice acting by [Miranda Richardson](#) as Carol Aird and [Andrea Deck](#) as Therese Belivet.

Fictional works about Patricia Highsmith

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- [Murray-Smith, Joanna](#) (2015). *Switzerland*. [Dramatists Play Service](#). ISBN 978-0-8222-3435-7. (First presented at [Sydney Theatre Company](#) in November 2014).

See also

- [Ruth Rendell](#): A "mistress of suspense" contemporary of Highsmith for whom Highsmith acknowledged rarely-admitted admiration. Rendell explored characters and themes similar to Highsmith's.

Notes

1. [^] The book was first published in 1975 in German, under the title *Kleine Geschichte für Weiberfeinde*, appearing in English two years later. The German title means, literally, *Little Tales for Misogynists*. Lezard remarked, "The mischief here extends to what at first glance looks like a single-minded assault on her own sex, until it becomes clear that what she is actually attacking is a range of stupid or vicious behaviours; the charge of misogyny is something of a [red herring](#)."
2. [^] Highsmith wrote in her "Diary 8" on June 17, 1948: "What is so impossible, is that the male face doesn't attract me, isn't *beautiful* to me. Though I can imagine a familiarity with a man, which would ... allow us to work and make us happy—and certainly sane ... [t]he question is, whether men alone, their *selves*, don't get *unbearably boring*?"

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