

Joy E. Rancatore Sample Interview

Who are your biggest literary influences?

While I've been inspired by many people—both famous and personal—the biggest influences to my writing include J.R.R. Tolkien, Laura Ingalls Wilder, C.S. Lewis, Emily and Charlotte Brontë, Lucy Maud Montgomery and my grandfather, Thomas George Kay.

What do you write?

My writing spans many genres; however, my primary completed words reside in the Christian Southern historical literary fiction, fantasy, nonfiction and children's picture book categories.

Where did you attend college?

I attended William Carey College (now University) in Hattiesburg, Miss., where I earned my bachelor of arts with a double major in Journalism and English and a minor in Spanish. That is also where I met the man who is now my husband.

When did you know you wanted to be an author?

I knew I wanted to be an author from a very young age. It took many battles with self-doubt, though, before I finally pursued my dream.

Why do you write?

I write from my heart to tell hope-filled tales of the soul that inspire people of all ages and to leave a literary legacy for my family and for future reader generations.

How do you find story ideas?

Story ideas are all around me, all the time. I see them in the eyes of a stranger, the headlines in the morning paper, the interactions of people around me and the dreams—both waking and sleeping—that drift through my subconscious. Every person, place and thing has a story; and I'd love to tell them all. My soul overflows with stories, so I frantically write; for they are immortal, but I am not.

To what extent do you find yourself within the characters you write?

Pieces of me reside deep within every character I write. It could be a mannerism, a word, a thought, an attribute or a reminder of someone I've known.

So what? What makes your stories unique?

I strive to tell ordinary tales in an extraordinary way and extraordinary yarns in a refreshingly ordinary light—each in my distinct voice.