

Topic Page: [Simon, Neil \(1927 - 2018\)](#)

Definition: **Simon, Neil** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

US playwright. Simon's plays include *Come Blow Your Horn* (1961), *The Odd Couple* (1965), the musical *Sweet Charity* (1966) and *Little Me* (1982). His films include *California Suite* (1978), *I Ought to Be in Pictures* (1982) and *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (1986).

Summary Article: **Simon, Neil**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

(Marvin Neil Simon), 1927–, American playwright, b. New York City. His plays, nearly all of them popular with audiences, if not always with critics, are comedies treating recognizable aspects of modern middle-class life. Simon spent his early years in television, pioneering the situation comedy and writing jokes for some of the medium's most successful comedians. His string of Broadway plays began with *Come Blow Your Horn* (1961). Particularly adept at portraying the middle-aged, Simon is a master jokesmith who builds up his characters through funny lines rather than plot, although he does often attempt serious themes. *The Gingerbread Lady* (1970), for example, deals honestly with alcoholism, and his Pulitzer Prize–winning *Lost in Yonkers* (1991) treats the anguish of parental rejection. His other plays, many of which are semiautobiographical, include *Barefoot in the Park* (1963), *The Odd Couple* (1965), *Plaza Suite* (1968), *The Prisoner of Second Avenue* (1971), *The Sunshine Boys* (1972), *The Good Doctor* (1973), *God's Favorite* (1974), *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (1983), *Biloxi Blues* (1984), *Broadway Bound* (1986), *Laughter on the 23d Floor* (1993), and *45 Seconds from Broadway* (2001). Many of his plays have been adapted into films, and Simon has written more than 20 screenplays.

See his memoirs, *Rewrites* (1996) and

The Play Goes On (1999);

biography by R. Johnson (1985);

studies by E. M. McGovern (2d ed. 1979), R. K. Johnson (1983), G. Konas, ed. (1997), H. Bloom, ed. (2002), and S. Koprince (2002).

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