



**Pat Conroy** was born in Atlanta, GA on October 26, 1945. As the son of a military officer, he and his family moved from place to place with great frequency during his childhood. He attended college at The Citadel Military Academy in Charleston, SC. It was at The Citadel where Conroy wrote his first book, *The Boo* (1969), about a well-respected teacher. It is a collection of stories revolving around Lt. Colonel Nugent Courvoisier, nicknamed “The Boo” by the cadets under his charge.

After graduating from The Citadel, Conroy moved to Beaufort, SC and taught English in a small schoolhouse on Daufuskie Island. He was fired after his first year for refusing to inflict corporal punishment on his students. The unacceptable conditions he witnessed at the school inspired him to write his first memoir, *The Water is Wide*, published in 1972. For his memoir, the National Education Association awarded Conroy with a humanitarian award. The book was later adapted into the feature film *Conrack* (1974) starring Jon Voight.

In 1976 *The Great Santini* was published. Conroy’s second memoir recounts his childhood with an abusive military father. The book was the main cause of his parent’s divorce, as well as his own divorce from his first wife. *The Great Santini* was also made into a film in 1979 and starred Robert Duvall.

In 1986, Conroy’s *The Prince of Tides* was published and would prove to become his most popular book. The book brought Conroy much praise from critics, who recognized Conroy’s superior storytelling ability as well as his unique prose stylings. There are over five million copies in print. The book was also adapted to film in 1991 and starred Barbra Streisand.

*The Death of Santini* (2013) is Pat Conroy’s most recent book. The memoir revisits the tumultuous lifestyle around which *The Great Santini* revolves; however, *The Death of Santini* looks onto the chaos with a more mature, enlightened eye. Conroy states that the book is his attempt at “one more night flight into the immortal darkness to study that house of pain one final time.” Pat Conroy currently resides in Beaufort, SC with his wife, Cassandra King, who is also a writer.

- Blake Bolen

## 1988 Inductee to the South Carolina Academy of Authors



Image Courtesy Pat Conroy

Pat Conroy