

Conversations with Nadine Gordimer (Literary Conversations Series)



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This volume collects three decades of interviews with Nadine Gordimer. In the interviews, she presents her attitudes toward her art and its interconnection with the oppressive, volatile politics in her native land. She has traveled extensively to other countries only to discover that no matter how white her skin she is indeed African and the only country she can call home is South Africa. "If you write honestly about life in South Africa, apartheid damns itself," she says. She is ruthlessly honest, and her fiction has played the vital role of communicating in detail to the rest of the world the effects of apartheid upon the daily lives of the South African people. To maintain her integrity, she writes as though she "were dead," without any thought of how anyone will react to what she has written. She remains heroically undaunted both by the banning of three of her novels by the white government and by the protests of radical blacks who assert that whites cannot write convincingly about blacks.She is concerned neither with the image of blacks nor with the image of whites, only with revealing the complexity, the full truth. This truth condemns the racism upon which apartheid is built. In her nine novels and eight volumes of short stories, Gordimer digs deeper and deeper until she has "thematic layers." These include "betrayal-political, sexual, every form" and "power, the way human beings use power in their relationships." Her accounts in these interviews of how she works and of which writers she admires will fascinate readers, scholars, teachers, and students alike.

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