Courage and Truthfulness: Ethical Strategies and the Creative Process in the Novels of Iris Murdoch, Doris Lessing and V.S. Naipaul.

by


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Summary

The novels of Iris Murdoch, Doris Lessing and V.S. Naipaul are studied in the light of statements they have made in essays and interviews regarding the ethical implications of writing fiction. The purpose of this research is to examine the nature of the problems they have identified in the creative process of writing and the strategies each has used to address the ethical problems they perceive, and to assess the relative success of their chosen methods.

It can be seen that, although for each of them the quest for truth is their highest concern, they have each developed very different ways of dealing with the problems they believe are connected with writing truthfully, and in addition, they have defined the particulars of these problems in different ways. It is concluded that the more carefully examined and individually defined these problems are, the greater the internal consistency and credibility which is achieved by the strategies they have developed to address the problems, and the more their work has developed in the course of their careers.
Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any
material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and
that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material
previously published or written by another person except where due reference is
made in the text.

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Gillian Dooley
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Note on Referencing

Published interviews with Murdoch, Lessing and Naipaul are a major source of information for this thesis. Accordingly, to avoid confusion, MLA style has been adapted to the extent that the interviewer is treated as the author of each interview, rather than the interviewee.