



Jamaica Kincaid: A Critical Companion (Critical Companions to Popular Contemporary Writers)

Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert

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With the publication of her novel *Annie John* in 1985, Jamaica Kincaid entered the ranks of the best novelists of her generation. Her three autobiographical novels, *Annie John*, *Lucy*, and *Autobiography of My Mother*, and collection of short stories, *At the Bottom of the River*, touch on the universal theme of coming-of-age and the female adolescent's need to sever her ties to her mother. This angst is couched in the social landscape of post-colonial Antigua, a small Caribbean island whose legacy of racism affects Kincaid's protagonists. Her fiction rewrites the history of the Caribbean from a West Indies perspective and this milieu colors the experiences of her characters.

Following a biographical chapter, Paravisini-Gebert traces the development of Kincaid's craft as a writer. Each of the novels and the collection of short stories is discussed in a separate chapter that includes sections on plot, character, theme, and an alternate critical approach from which to read the novel, such as feminist. A complete primary and secondary bibliography and lists of selected reviews of Kincaid's work complete the study.

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