



J. M. Coetzee: A Life in Writing

By J. C. Kannemeyer

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A global publishing event of the rarest kind, this biography has been written with the full cooperation of J. M. Coetzee, who granted the author interviews, and put him in touch with family, friends, and colleagues who could talk about events in Coetzee's life. For the first time, Coetzee allowed complete access to his private papers and documents, including the manuscripts of his 16 novels. Author J. C. Kannemeyer made a study of the enormous body of literature on Coetzee, and through archival research unearthed further information not previously available. The book deals in depth with Coetzee's origins, early years, and first writings; his British interlude from 1962–65; his time in America from 1965–71; his 30 years back in South Africa, when he achieved international recognition and won the Man Booker Prize; and his Australian years since 2002, during which time he won the Nobel Prize. *J. M. Coetzee: A Life in Writing* is a major work that corrects many of the misconceptions about Coetzee and illuminates the genesis and implications of his novels.

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J. M. Coetzee: A Life in Writing By J. C. Kannemeyer **Bibliography**

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Editorial Review

Review

“Kannemeyer properly dedicates a generous portion of the biography to accounts of the genesis, composition, publication and reception of Coetzee’s fictions. . . . For the most part, the biographer’s careful scholarship and efforts at inclusiveness are welcome.” —Geordie Williamson, *Weekend Australian*

“In the astonishingly short space of three years, Kannemeyer wrote this revealing and thorough volume . . . Coetzee’s fame and his reclusiveness guarantee the book will attract enormous interest. . . . This important biography . . . sheds more light on a great writer than anything that has appeared previously.” —Peter Alexander, *Age*

“A valuable document. . . . Throughout this biography, Coetzee’s work, his letters and lectures are quoted extensively and the classicism of his writing is evident in every sentence. Wisely, Kannemeyer does not try to compete. Instead, he suggests that what Coetzee wrote of Beckett might well be applied to Coetzee himself: ‘Beckett was an artist possessed by a vision of life without consolation or dignity or promise of grace, in the face of which our only duty — inexplicable and futile of attainment, but a duty nonetheless — is not to lie to ourselves.’ That’s why he matters.” —David Sexton, *London Evening Standard*

“*J.M. Coetzee: A Life in Writing* is a tome of serious scholarship, meticulously researched, and mammoth in scale, yet eminently readable and, in parts, utterly absorbing. . . . It is a masterly tome that certainly lends greater understanding for anyone intending to read their way through Coetzee’s entire oeuvre and will, without question, be the starting point for all such biographies to come.” —Billy O’Callaghan, *Irish Examiner*

About the Author

J. C. Kannemeyer was professor of Afrikaans and Dutch at Stellenbosch University. He is the author of a two-volume history of Afrikaans literature, as well as of six extensive biographies of Afrikaans authors.

Users Review

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