



Doris Lessing

Lessing was born in Persia (now Iran) and grew up in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), where her father made an unsuccessful attempt to farm maize. Though she loved living on the farm, her family life was often tense and unhappy. Lessing married at the age of 20, but three years later, feeling stifled by colonial life and increasingly distressed by the racism of her society, she joined the Communist Party, "because they were the only people I had ever met who fought the color bar in their lives."

Soon after that, she left her husband and first two children to marry fellow Communist Gottfried Lessing, with whom she had a son. They divorced, and she took her son with her to England, where she published her first novel, *The Grass Is Singing*, to high acclaim. After several more novels, including the semi-autobiographical series *Children of Violence*, Lessing wrote *The Golden Notebook*, a postmodern, fragmentary narrative about a writer's search for identity. *The Golden Notebook* gained a passionate following in the feminist movement and "left its mark upon the ideas and feelings of a whole generation of women."