

Lucy Jamaica Kincaid

Best Books of 2019: Washington Post • O, The Oprah Magazine • Time • NPR • People • Buzzfeed A TODAY Show #ReadWithJenna Book Club Selection Winner • Lambda Literary Award [Lesbian Fiction] A Washington Post Lily Lit Club Selection Longlisted • PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction American Library Association • A Barbara Gittings Literature Award Honor Book (Stonewall Book Awards) Finalist • Aspen Words Literary Prize Apple Books • Best Books of the Month New York Times Book Review • Editors' Choice Selection Kirkus Reviews • Most Memorable Fictional Families of 2019 Longlisted • The Morning News Tournament of Books A Rumpus Book Club Selection

A beautifully layered portrait of motherhood, immigration, and the sacrifices we make in the name of love from award-winning novelist Nicole Dennis-Benn. Heralded for writing "deeply memorable . . . women" (Jennifer Senior, New York Times), Nicole Dennis-Benn introduces readers to an unforgettable heroine for our times: the eponymous Patsy, who leaves her young daughter behind in Jamaica to follow Cicely, her oldest friend, to New York. Beating with the pulse of a long-withheld confession and peppered with lilting patois, Patsy gives voice to a woman who looks to America for the opportunity to love whomever she chooses, bravely putting herself first. But to survive as an undocumented immigrant, Patsy is forced to work as a nanny, while back in Jamaica her daughter, Tru, ironically struggles to understand why she was left behind. Greeted with international critical acclaim from readers who, at last, saw themselves represented in Patsy, this astonishing novel "fills a literary void with compassion, complexity and tenderness" (Joshunda Sanders, Time), offering up a vital portrait of the chasms between selfhood and motherhood, the American dream and reality.

Caribbean Women Writers is a collection of scholarly articles on the fiction of selected Caribbean women writers from Antigua, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad. It includes not only close critical analysis of texts by Erna Brodber, Dionne Brand, Zee Edgell, Jamaica Kincaid, Paule Marshall, Pauline Melville, Jean Rhys and Olive Senior, but also personal statements from the writers Merle Collins, Beryl Gilroy, Vernella Fuller and Velma Pollard.

Lucy, a nineteen-year-old girl from the West Indies, comes to North America to work as an au pair and observes the unhealthy realities of the seemingly happy family that employs her, in a new edition of the acclaimed coming-of-age novel. Reprint.

In See Now Then, the brilliant and evocative new novel from Jamaica Kincaid—her first in ten years—a marriage is revealed in all its joys and agonies. This piercing examination of the manifold ways in which the passing of time operates on the human consciousness unfolds gracefully, and Kincaid inhabits each of her characters—a mother, a father, and their two children, living in a small village in New England—as they move, in their own minds, between the present, the past, and the future: for, as she writes, "the present will be now then and the past is now then and the future will be a now then." Her characters, constrained by the world, despair in their domestic situations. But their minds wander, trying to make linear sense of what is, in fact, nonlinear. See Now Then is Kincaid's attempt to make clear what is unclear, and to make unclear what we assumed was clear: that is, the beginning, the middle, and the end. Since the publication of her first short-story collection, *At the Bottom of the River*, which was nominated for a PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction, Kincaid has demonstrated

a unique talent for seeing beyond and through the surface of things. In *See Now Then*, she envelops the reader in a world that is both familiar and startling—creating her most emotionally and thematically daring work yet.

"Seeing the story illustrated with artwork by Ricardo Cortés gives it new life, and gives readers a whole new way of being drawn in. Kincaid and Cortés also capture the kind of wonder that children see new experiences through, making this adventure a particularly heartwarming read." --Bookstr "Party has layers. It functions as a subtle message about what it means to witness horror to such a degree that we lose our language for it; it is a quiet story about coming of age, suddenly, as a young black girl because of what the world shows us. It is about the many words our silence can hold, the way our absences can ring as loudly and discordantly as the words we do feel able to say." --Literary Hub "The book's effervescent pictures, and its playful, secretive ending, will have young readers paging through it again and again, constructing stories and observations of their own. *Party: A Mystery* is an ideal gift for young readers. The book will put kids's curiosity to work during a busy holiday season." --Alfred Hitchcock's *Mystery Magazine* "Kincaid believes that, in illustrating *Party*, Cortés only enhanced the story's enigma, providing a greater sense of intrigue and playfulness likely to appeal to young readers." --Publishers Weekly, from a Miami Book Fair 2019 feature "Each girl is so unique and amiable that readers will be drawn into the mystery before they know it, desperately searching for clues. Cortés's expressive paintings help to show the characters' personalities and the setting, providing some hidden hints to readers...A charming book about character and suspense that will be intriguing to many young mystery readers." --School Library Journal "This story by acclaimed author Kincaid gets new life in this picture book with lush, glowingly realistic illustrations...The artwork is gorgeous and the feeling of being a kid who's a little too short to see what's happening will likely resonate with the target audience." --Booklist "This send-up of the Nancy Drew mysteries by Kincaid first appeared as a 1980 *New Yorker* story about a gala celebrating the 50th anniversary of the first book's publication. Here, Kincaid's piece is recast as a picture book with dramatic artwork by Cortés...Detailed, almost photographically realistic portraits of girls and partygoers by Cortés, shown against marble architectural backdrops that suggest the New York Public Library, engage throughout...A gem." --Publishers Weekly "A beautifully drawn picture book adventure story that promises questions that will grab children ages 3-7--but does not guarantee an answer! Unique, uncommon, entertaining, and thoroughly 'kid friendly,' *Party: A Mystery* is extraordinary and highly recommended." --Midwest Book Review "The illustrations and realism make *Party* a satisfying read that will resonate with younger siblings (or anyone who has experienced the frustration of ignorance). Two other aspects of *Party* enhance what is already a thoroughly satisfying book: the ending and the fact that the party is in celebration of Nancy Drew." --Glass of Wine, Glass of Milk Three girls--Pam, Beth, and Sue--attend a party to celebrate the publication of the first of the Nancy Drew mystery books. There are many distractions at the fancy affair: flower arrangements, partygoers, refreshments, and lots and lots of marble. Suddenly, the oldest girl, Pam, sees what can only be described as something truly...bilious...not good! Beth sees it too. The youngest, Sue, does not, and as usual she has a hard time getting anyone to tell her anything. *Party: A Mystery* is a beautifully drawn adventure story that promises questions that will grab children, but does not guarantee an answer.

Women's Lives into Print provides a remarkable collection of essays by feminist scholars and writers who focus on the theory, practice and writing of women's auto/biographies. Not only does it foster debate about the reading and interpretation of women's lives, it also explores issues relating to research methodology, and raises questions about the representation of women within feminist auto/biography. Working across a range of subject disciplines, this book comprises a vital and ground-breaking critical text for anyone interested in auto/biography.

The story of an ordinary man, his century, and his home: "Kincaid's most poetic and affecting novel to date" (Robert Antoni, *The Washington Post Book World*) Jamaica Kincaid's first obsession, the island of Antigua, comes vibrantly to life under the gaze of Mr. Potter, an illiterate taxi chauffeur who makes his living along the roads that pass through the only towns he has ever seen and the graveyard where he will be buried. The sun shines squarely overhead, the ocean lies on every side, and suppressed passion fills the air. Ignoring the legacy of his father, a poor fisherman, and his mother, who committed suicide, Mr. Potter struggles to live at ease amid his surroundings: to purchase a car, to have girlfriends, and to shake off the encumbrance of his daughters—one of whom will return to Antigua after he dies and tell his story with equal measures of distance and sympathy. In *Mr. Potter*, Kincaid breathes life into a figure unlike any other in contemporary fiction, an individual consciousness emerging gloriously out of an unexamined life.

The first substantial collection of short fiction from "a writer with enough electricity to light up the country" (Ann Patchett) "I guess the things that scare you are the things that are almost normal," observes one narrator in this collection of effervescent and often uncanny stories. Drawing on fifteen years of work, *See You in Paradise* is the fullest expression yet of J. Robert Lennon's distinctive and brilliantly comic take on the pathos and surreality at the heart of American life. In *Lennon's America*, a portal to another universe can be discovered with surprising nonchalance in a suburban backyard, adoption almost reaches the level of blood sport, and old pals return from the dead to steal your girlfriend. Sexual dysfunction, suicide, tragic accidents, and career stagnation all create surprising opportunities for unexpected grace in this full-hearted and mischievous depiction of those days (weeks, months, years) we all have when things just don't go quite right.

Lucy, a teenage girl from the West Indies, comes to work as an au pair for a wealthy American couple, discovering the dark side behind their facade of happiness as she also awakens to her own sexuality

"We stand to learn much about the durability of or changes in the American way of life from writers such as Bharati Mukherjee (born in India), Ursula Hegi (born in Germany), Jerzy Kosinski (born in Poland), Jamaica Kincaid (born in Antigua), Cristina Garcia (born in Cuba), Edwidge Danticat (born in Haiti), Wendy Law-Yone (born in Burma), Mylène Dressler (born in the Netherlands), Lan Cao (born in Vietnam), and such Korean-born authors as Chang-rae Lee, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, and Nora Okja Keller—writers who in recent years have come to this country and, in their work, contributed to its culture."—David Cowart In *Trailing Clouds*, David Cowart offers fresh insights into contemporary American literature by exploring novels and short stories published since 1970 by immigrant writers. Balancing historical and social context with close readings of selected works, Cowart explores the major themes raised in

immigrant writing: the acquisition of language, the dual identity of the immigrant, the place of the homeland, and the nature of citizenship. Cowart suggests that the attention to first-generation writers (those whose parents immigrated) has not prepared us to read the fresher stories of those more recent arrivals whose immigrant experience has been more direct and unmediated. Highlighting the nuanced reflection in immigrant fiction of a nation that is ever more diverse and multicultural, Cowart argues that readers can learn much about the changes in the American way of life from writers who have come to this country, embraced its culture, and penned substantial literary work in English.

One of our finest writers on one of her greatest loves. Jamaica Kincaid's first garden in Vermont was a plot in the middle of her front lawn. There, to the consternation of more experienced friends, she planted only seeds of the flowers she liked best. In *My Garden* (Book) she gathers all she loves about gardening and plants, and examines it generously, passionately, and with sharp, idiosyncratic discrimination. Kincaid's affections are matched in intensity only by her dislikes. She loves spring and summer but cannot bring herself to love winter, for it hides the garden. She adores the rhododendron *Jane Grant*, and appreciates ordinary *Blue Lake* string beans, but abhors the *Asiatic lily*. The sources of her inspiration -- seed catalogues, the gardener *Gertrude Jekyll*, gardens like *Monet's* at *Giverny* -- are subjected to intense scrutiny. She also examines the idea of the garden on *Antigua*, where she grew up. *My Garden* (Book) is an intimate, playful, and penetrating book on gardens, the plants that fill them, and the persons who tend them.

Finally available in the United States, a singular story collection that *Time Out* declared "unsettlingly brilliant" *A student's suicide note* is not what it seems. A high school football rivalry turns absurd—and deadly. A much-loved cat seems to have been a different animal all along. A pair of identical twins aren't identical at all—or even related. A man finds his own yellowed birth announcement inside a bureau bought at auction. Set in a small upstate New York town, told in a conversational style, *Pieces for the Left Hand* is a stream of a hundred anecdotes, none much longer than a page. At once funny, bizarre, familiar, and disturbing, these deceptively straightforward tales nevertheless shock and amaze through uncanny coincidence, tragic misunderstanding, strange occurrence, or sudden insight. Unposted letters, unexpected visitors, false memories—in *J. Robert Lennon's* vision of America, these are the things that decide our fate. Wry and deadpan, powerful and philosophical, these addictive little tales reveal the everyday world as a strange and eerie place.

The reader is left to uncover the truth in this labyrinth of a tale, a riveting story told within the framework of one reporter's notes and a woman's letters from prison. Everyone believes that *Maureen and Harrold English*, two successful New York City journalists, have a happy, stable marriage. It's the early '70s and no one discusses or even suspects domestic abuse. But after *Maureen* suffers another brutal beating, she flees New York with her infant daughter and seeks refuge in a small coastal town in Maine. The weeks pass slowly, and just as *Maureen* begins to heal physically and emotionally, *Harrold* finds her, bringing the story to a violent, unforgettable end.

A seventy-year-old West Indian woman looks back over the course of her life and examines the relationships that have given meaning to her existence

Offers a new perspective on the psychological and affective dynamics of Jamaica

Kincaid's fiction and nonfiction. Haunted by the memories of her powerfully destructive mother, Jamaica Kincaid is a writer out of necessity. Born Elaine Potter Richardson, Kincaid grew up in the West Indies in the shadow of her deeply contemptuous and abusive mother, Annie Drew. Drawing heavily on Kincaid's many remarks on the autobiographical sources of her writings, J. Brooks Bouson investigates the ongoing construction of Kincaid's autobiographical and political identities. She focuses attention on what many critics find so enigmatic and what lies at the heart of Kincaid's fiction and nonfiction work: the "mother mystery." Bouson demonstrates, through careful readings, how Kincaid uses her writing to transform her feelings of shame into pride as she wins the praise of an admiring critical establishment and an ever-growing reading public. J. Brooks Bouson is Professor of English at Loyola University Chicago. She is the author of *Quiet As It's Kept: Shame, Trauma, and Race in the Novels of Toni Morrison*, also published by SUNY Press; *Brutal Choreographies: Oppositional Strategies and Narrative Design in the Novels of Margaret Atwood*; and *The Empathic Reader: A Study of the Narcissistic Character and the Drama of the Self*.

A comprehensive survey of the life and works of a writer deeply invested in themes of exile and exploitation

Lucy, a teenage girl from the West Indies, comes to America to work as an au pair for a wealthy couple. She begins to notice cracks in their beautiful façade at the same time that the mysteries of own sexuality begin to unravel. Jamaica Kincaid has created a startling new heroine who is destined to win a place of honor in contemporary fiction.

The result of experimental breeding between a human and ape, 14-year-old Lucy is rescued from the Congo jungle where she has lived exclusively among apes and experiences stunning revelations about herself when she is relocated to a Chicago suburb. Reprint.

Lucy A Novel Macmillan

From the author of the National Book Award finalist *Black Leopard, Red Wolf* and the WINNER of the 2015 Man Booker Prize for *A Brief History of Seven Killings* "An undeniable success." — *The New York Times Book Review* A true triumph of voice and storytelling, *The Book of Night Women* rings with both profound authenticity and a distinctly contemporary energy. It is the story of Lilith, born into slavery on a Jamaican sugar plantation at the end of the eighteenth century. Even at her birth, the slave women around her recognize a dark power that they—and she—will come to both revere and fear. The Night Women, as they call themselves, have long been plotting a slave revolt, and as Lilith comes of age they see her as the key to their plans. But when she begins to understand her own feelings, desires, and identity, Lilith starts to push at the edges of what is imaginable for the life of a slave woman, and risks becoming the conspiracy's weak link. But the real revelation of the book—the secret to the stirring imagery and insistent prose—is Marlon James himself, a young writer at once breath-

takingly daring and wholly in command of his craft.

Is it possible to simultaneously belong to and be exiled from a community? In *Politics of the Female Body*, Ketu H. Katrak argues that it is not only possible, but common, especially for women who have been subjects of colonial empires. Through her careful analysis of postcolonial literary texts, Katrak uncovers the ways that the female body becomes a site of both oppression and resistance. She examines writers working in the English language, including Anita Desai from India, Ama Ata Aidoo from Ghana, and Merle Hodge from Trinidad, among others. The writers share colonial histories, a sense of solidarity, and resistance strategies in the on-going struggles of decolonization that center on the body. Bringing together a rich selection of primary texts, Katrak examines published novels, poems, stories, and essays, as well as activist materials, oral histories, and pamphlets—forms that push against the boundaries of what is considered strictly literary. In these varied materials, she reveals common political and feminist alliances across geographic boundaries. A unique comparative look at women's literary work and its relationship to the body in third world societies, this text will be of interest to literary scholars and to those working in the fields of postcolonial studies and women's studies.

In her ravishing and moving second novel, the bestselling author of *In the Cut* tells the story of Mamie Clarke, who sets out to lose herself in New York City. Having only previously known the fragile, magical world of her childhood on the lush Hawaiian island of Kaua'i, Mamie leaves college to visit her sophisticated aunt in New York. With her beautiful and self-destructive younger sister Claire in tow, Mamie must learn to make her way in a world of money, power, sex, and drugs. Moore's sharp and witty book captures an unforgettable time and place—the Manhattan of the early 80s— and the powerful feelings engendered there.

The most inventive and entertaining novel to date from “a master of the dark arts” (Kelly Link) *A Modest House* in upstate New York. One in the morning. Three people—a couple and their child—hurry out the door, but it's too late for them. As the virtuosic and terrifying opening scene of *Broken River* unfolds, a spectral presence seems to be watching with cold and mysterious interest. Soon the house lies abandoned, and years later a new family moves in. Karl, Eleanor, and their daughter, Irina, arrive from New York City in the wake of Karl's infidelity to start anew. Karl tries to stabilize his flailing art career. Eleanor, a successful commercial novelist, eagerly pivots in a new creative direction. Meanwhile, twelve-year-old Irina becomes obsessed with the brutal murders that occurred in the house years earlier. And, secretly, so does her mother. As the ensemble cast grows to include Louis, a hapless salesman in a carpet warehouse who is haunted by his past, and Sam, a young woman newly reunited with her jailbird brother, the seemingly unrelated crime that opened the story becomes ominously relevant. Hovering over all this activity looms a gradually awakening narrative consciousness that watches these characters lie to themselves and each other, unleashing forces that none of them could have anticipated and that put them in mortal danger. *Broken River* is a cinematic, darkly comic, and sui generis psychological thriller that could only have been written by J. Robert Lennon.

DIVClear Word and Third Sight examines the strands of a collective African diasporic

consciousness represented in the work of a number of Black Caribbean writers. Catherine A. John shows how a shared consciousness, or “third sight,” is rooted in both pre- and postcolonial cultural practices and disseminated through a rich oral tradition. This consciousness has served diasporic communities by creating an alternate philosophical “worldsense” linking those of African descent across space and time. Contesting popular discourses about what constitutes culture and maintaining that neglected strains in negritude discourse provide a crucial philosophical perspective on the connections between folk practices, cultural memory, and collective consciousness, John examines the diasporic principles in the work of the negritude writers Léon Damas, Aimé Césaire, and Léopold Senghor. She traces the manifestations and reworkings of their ideas in Afro-Caribbean writing from the eastern and French Caribbean, as well as the Caribbean diaspora in the United States. The authors she discusses include Jamaica Kincaid, Earl Lovelace, Simone Schwarz-Bart, Audre Lorde, Paule Marshall, and Edouard Glissant, among others. John argues that by incorporating what she calls folk groundings—such as poems, folktales, proverbs, and songs—into their work, Afro-Caribbean writers invoke a psychospiritual consciousness which combines old and new strategies for addressing the ongoing postcolonial struggle./div

The theme of lost childhood remains constant in this short fictional narrative of rebellious Annie John's coming of age on the small island of Antigua

Explores the gendered subjectivity of West Indian writers and their dependence on models from Victorian England for their narratives of self and nation.

In this travel memoir, the acclaimed novelist Jamaica Kincaid chronicles a three-week trek through Nepal, the spectacular and exotic Himalayan land, where she and her companions are gathering seeds for planting at home. The natural world and, in particular, plants and gardening are central to Kincaid's work; in addition to such novels as *Annie John* and *Lucy*, Kincaid is the author of *My Garden* (Book): a collection of essays about her love of cultivating plants and gardens throughout her life. *Among Flowers* intertwines meditations on nature and stunning descriptions of the Himalayan landscape with observations on the ironies, difficulties, and dangers of this magnificent journey. For Kincaid and three botanist friends, Nepal is a paradise, a place where a single day's hike can traverse climate zones, from subtropical to alpine, encompassing flora suitable for growing at their homes, from Wales to Vermont. Yet as she makes clear, there is far more to this foreign world than rhododendrons that grow thirty feet high. Danger, too, is a constant companion—and the leeches are the least of the worries. Unpredictable Maoist guerillas live in these perilous mountains, and when they do appear—as they do more than once—their enigmatic presence lingers long after they have melted back into the landscape. And Kincaid, who writes of the looming, lasting effects of colonialism in her works, necessarily explores the irony of her status as memsahib with Sherpas and bearers. A wonderful blend of introspective insight and beautifully rendered description, *Among Flowers* is a vivid, engrossing, and characteristically frank memoir from one of our most striking voices.

Jamaica Kincaid's brother Devon Drew died of AIDS on January 19, 1996, at the age of thirty-three. Kincaid's incantatory, poetic, and often shockingly frank recounting of her brother's life and death is also a story of her family on the island of Antigua, a constellation centered on the powerful, sometimes threatening figure of the writer's

mother. My Brother is an unblinking record of a life that ended too early, and it speaks volumes about the difficult truths at the heart of all families. My Brother is a 1997 National Book Award Finalist for Nonfiction.

Tom and Jordy have been living with gran since the day their mother, Loretta, left them on her doorstep and disappeared. Now Loretta's returned, and all three hit the road in her beat-up car. But Loretta isn't mother material. She's broke, unreliable, lost. And then she disappears again.

Restless Classics presents the Three-Hundredth Anniversary Edition of Robinson Crusoe, the classic Caribbean adventure story and foundational English novel, with new illustrations by Eko and an introduction by Jamaica Kincaid that contextualizes the book for our globalized, postcolonial era. Three centuries after Daniel Defoe published Robinson Crusoe, this gripping tale of a castaway who spends thirty years on a remote tropical island near Trinidad, encountering cannibals, captives, and mutineers before being ultimately rescued, remains a classic of the adventure genre and is widely considered the first great English novel. But the book also has much to teach us, in retrospect, about entrenched attitudes of colonizers toward the colonized that still resound today. As celebrated Caribbean writer Jamaica Kincaid writes in her bold new introduction, "The vivid, vibrant, subtle, important role of the tale of Robinson Crusoe, with his triumph of individual resilience and ingenuity wrapped up in his European, which is to say white, identity, has played in the long, uninterrupted literature of European conquest of the rest of the world must not be dismissed or ignored or silenced."

Seminar paper from the year 2004 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 2,0, Humboldt-University of Berlin (Amerikanistisches Institut), course: HS: Postcolonial Theory, Literature and Gender, 11 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: Introduction The autobiographical novel Lucy was written by Jamaica Kincaid in 1990. The author, who was born in 1949 on the Caribbean island of Antigua, is one of the representative figures of postcolonial literature, which has been gaining prominence since the 1970s. With the appearance of the work "The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures" written by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin in 1989 the popularity of the term "Postcolonialism" grew even more. The definition of the term is still widely discussed but in general postcolonial literature deals with the effects of colonization on the colonized people and society after the end of colonization. The term "post" indicates that Postcolonialism is relating to the time following the establishment of independence in a colony. That means, the time after the colonial powers have left the country and the time of colonization is over. Nevertheless, the issues of Postcolonialism are so many-sided that they often transcend a strict definition of the term, which is therefore used much more loosely in practice. Postcolonial themes not only discuss the period after the departure of the imperial powers but also deal with the time before independence. Major issues are the oppression of the indigenous people by the imperial powers, the gaining of independence, the impact of colonization on postcolonial history and culture, the search for personal and national identity but also the economic dependency of the postcolony on its former colonizers. Thus some critics even question the term Postcolonialism, since it indicates that the period when the colony was dependent on its colonizers is over. They argue that most former c

School Days (Chemin-d'Ecole) is a captivating narrative based on Patrick Chamoiseau's childhood in Fort-de-France, Martinique. It is a revelatory account of the colonial world that shaped one of the liveliest and most creative voices in French and Caribbean literature today. Through the eyes of the boy Chamoiseau, we meet his severe, Francophile teacher, a man intent upon banishing all remnants of Creole from his students' speech. This domineering man is succeeded by an equally autocratic teacher, an Africanist and proponent of "Negritude." Along the way we are also introduced to Big Bellybutton, the class scapegoat, whose tales of Creole heroes and heroines, magic, zombies, and fantastic animals provide a fertile contrast to the imported French fairy tales told in school. In prose punctuated by Creolisms and ribald humor, Chamoiseau infuses the universal terrors, joys, and disappointments of a child's early school days with the unique experiences of a Creole boy forced to confront the dominant culture in a colonial school. School Days mixes understanding with laughter, knowledge with entertainment—in ways that will fascinate and delight readers of all ages.

From "The Talk of the Town," Jamaica Kincaid's first impressions of snobbish, mobbish New York Talk Pieces is a collection of Jamaica Kincaid's original writing for the New Yorker's "Talk of the Town," composed during the time when she first came to the United States from Antigua, from 1978 to 1983. Kincaid found a unique voice, at once in sync with William Shawn's tone for the quintessential elite insider's magazine, and (though unsigned) all her own--wonderingly alive to the ironies and screwball details that characterized her adopted city. New York is a town that, in return, fast adopts those who embrace it, and in these early pieces Kincaid discovers many of its hilarious secrets and urban mannerisms. She meets Miss Jamaica, visiting from Kingston, and escorts the reader to the West Indian-American Day parade in Brooklyn; she sees Ed Koch don his "Cheshire-cat smile" and watches Tammy Wynette autograph a copy of Lattimore's Odyssey; she learns the worlds of publishing and partying, of fashion and popular music, and how to call a cauliflower a crudite. The book also records Kincaid's development as a young writer--the newcomer who sensitively records her impressions here takes root to become one of our most respected authors.

A brilliant look at colonialism and its effects in Antigua--by the author of Annie John "If you go to Antigua as a tourist, this is what you will see. If you come by aeroplane, you will land at the V. C. Bird International Airport. Vere Cornwall (V. C.) Bird is the Prime Minister of Antigua. You may be the sort of tourist who would wonder why a Prime Minister would want an airport named after him--why not a school, why not a hospital, why not some great public monument. You are a tourist and you have not yet seen . . ." So begins Jamaica Kincaid's expansive essay, which shows us what we have not yet seen of the ten-by-twelve-mile island in the British West Indies where she grew up. Lyrical, sardonic, and forthright by turns, in a Swiftian mode, A Small Place cannot help but amplify our vision of one small place and all that it signifies.

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