



Conversations with Salman Rushdie (Literary Conversations Series)

Salman Rushdie, Michael Reder, Michael R. Reder

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"If there's an attempt to silence a writer, the best thing a writer can do is not be silenced. If somebody is trying to stifle your voice, you should try and make sure it speaks louder than before."

Acclaim, success, and controversy follow every one of Salman Rushdie's writings. His novels and stories have won him awards and made him both famous in the literary world and a catalyst for protests worldwide. For nearly a decade after publication of *The Satanic Verses*, he faced a bounty on his life.

Although Rushdie has participated in a great number of interviews, many of his most revealing conversations were published in journals and newspapers throughout the globe -- not only in England and the United States, but also in India, Canada, and across Europe. *Conversations with Salman Rushdie*, the first collection of interviews with Rushdie, brings together the best and some of the rarest of the interviews the author has granted.

Though many know Rushdie for his novels, what most do not realize is the breadth of Rushdie's writing and thinking. There are many other Salman Rushdies -- the travel writer, the crafter of short stories, the filmmaker, the "children's" story writer, the essayist and critic, and the unflinching commentator on contemporary culture, particularly on race and inequality.

"The speaking of suppressed truths is one of the great possibilities of the novel," he tells the *Third World Book Review*, "and it is perhaps the main reason why the novel becomes the most dangerous of art forms in all countries where people, governments, are trying to distort the truth."

Rushdie talks extensively about the creative process, about his views on art and politics, and about his life before and after the fatwa. Articulate, witty, and learned, he shows the side of himself that sparks such controversy. While not necessarily seeking to provoke, Rushdie shows how controversy is often inseparable from the politically charged situations and issues that compel him to write.

Rushdie takes risks in his writing, pushing both the novelistic form and language to its limits. "Dispense with safety nets," he says in *Imaginary Homelands*. These interviews reveal a man with a powerful mind, a wry sense of humor, and an unshakable commitment to justice.

Michael R. Reder is director of the Roth Writing Center and an instructor in the department of English at Connecticut College.

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