

ABSTRACT

Narrative Form and the Female Experience: A Study
of Selected Works of Doris Lessing, Alice Walker,
and Erna Brodber

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The relationship between form and content remains a basic controversial issue in the study of the novel. The primary focus in this thesis is the relationship between the experiences of the female protagonists and the innovative ways in which their fragmentation is expressed in discontinuous narrative forms. The three novels selected reflect this relationship in unique ways: The Color Purple uses an epistolary narrative form; Jane and Louisa employs the form of the case-study, and The Golden Notebook uses a combination of journal and diary. This thesis asserts and these novels demonstrate that form is integrally bound up with content and that these broken narratives become powerful vehicles for dramatizing the broken nature of women's lives.