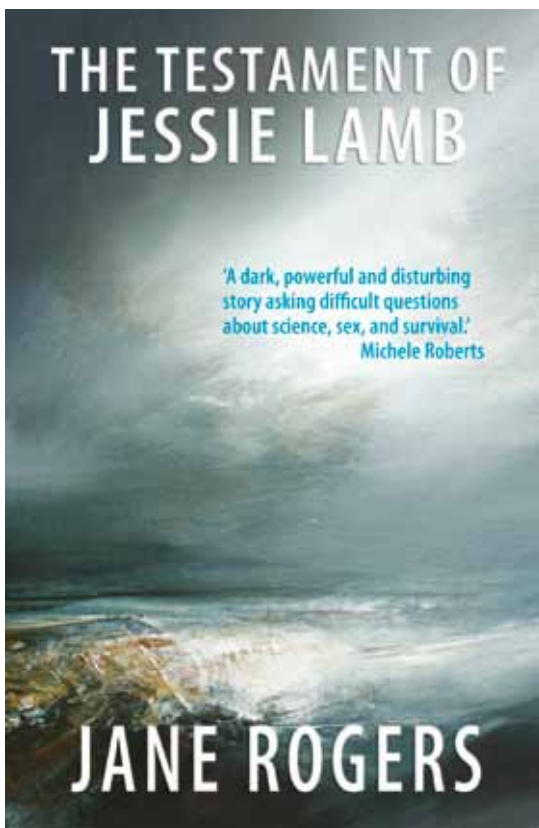




Reader's Guide



Other novels by Jane Rogers

Separate Tracks (1983)
Her Living Image (1984)
The Ice is Singing (1987)
Mr Wroe's Virgins (1991)
Promised Lands (1995)
Island (1998)
The Voyage Home (2004)

The Testament of Jessie Lamb

Jane Rogers

Sandstone Press
£7.99

www.themanbookerprize.com

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About the author

Jane Rogers has written eight novels including *Her Living Image* (Somerset Maugham Award), *Mr Wroe's Virgins* (Guardian Fiction Prize runner-up), *Promised Lands* (Writers Guild Best Novel Award), *Island* (Orange long-listed), and *The Voyage Home*.

She has written drama for radio and TV, including an award-winning adaptation of *Mr Wroe's Virgins* for BBC2, and a single play which won the Samuel Beckett award. Her radio work includes original drama and Classic Serial adaptations. She has taught writing at the University of Adelaide, Paris Sorbonne IV, and has worked on a radio drama project in Eastern Uganda. Jane is Professor of Writing at Sheffield Hallam University, and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

The Testament of Jessie Lamb

Women are dying in their millions. Some blame scientists, some see the hand of God, some see human arrogance reaping the punishment it deserves. Jessie Lamb is an ordinary girl living in extraordinary times: as her world collapses, her idealism and courage drive her towards the ultimate act of heroism. If the human race is to survive, it's up to her. But is Jessie heroic? Or is she, as her father fears, impressionable, innocent, incapable of understanding where her actions will lead?

Discussion points

Do you agree that "The scary thing about this novel is that the questions it raises are so close to home"?
Katy Guest, *The Independent*

What issues does *The Testament of Jessie Lamb* raise about how far society should go to save the next generation?

The novel is narrated by Jessie in a straightforward style using stripped-down prose, what impact does this have on the reader? Is her voice authentic?

Do you think Jessie is heroic or deluded?

In an interview Jane Rogers said "I find the power relationships between parents and children, colonisers and colonised, men and women, endlessly fascinating, and unpredictable in their playing out". How did you feel about Jessie's relationship with her father and the actions he takes to try and dissuade her from the path on which she is set?

What is it that ultimately makes us (or Jessie) feel the need to take action?

Themed reading

Margaret Atwood *The Handmaid's Tale*
John Wyndham *The Chrysalids*
P.D. James *Children of Men*
Kazuo Ishiguro *Never Let Me Go*

Useful links

Jane Rogers' website

<http://www.janerogers.org>

Publisher's website

<http://www.sandstonepress.com>

Interview about the writing of Jessie Lamb

http://www.weareoca.com/creative_writing/a-small-calm-voice-of-reason-in-a-nonsensical-world/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2011-29

Round up of reviews

http://theomnivore.co.uk/Book/7367-The_Testament_of_Jessie_Lamb/default.aspx