

**“Come Rap for the Planet”:
Matters of Life and Death in Nadine Gordimer’s
Get a Life (2005)**

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Abstract. *Get a Life* (2005) is Nadine Gordimer’s latest and probably last novel. As some of its reviewers have suggested, it is not a major addition to her oeuvre. However, its significance lies in its activist thrust as the first truly ‘green’ novel published in post-apartheid South Africa. Using a basic ecocritical approach, the following essay exposes the eco-conscious character of the book. Furthermore, it shows how the novel engages in some crucial contemporary debates in the South African public sphere and situates them in the global context of the 21st century. At the same time, by looking at some of Gordimer’s short stories written around the time of publication of *Get a Life* and primarily at the novel itself, this essay analyses how the author explores the topics of ageing and natural death as well as the need to leave a trace of one’s life beyond physical existence.

Keywords: ecocriticism, post-apartheid literature and society, globalisation, confrontation with ageing and death

And what a rich mix it is... we have... elements of...even green consciousness
(long before the Greens existed, we had green in our flag, representing land).
(Albie Sachs)

We must take responsibility for nature.
(Frederick Turner)