

# Sally Rooney: The Marxist Writer [C1]

Sally Rooney, l'acclamata scrittrice irlandese, è nota non solo per il suo talento letterario, ma anche per le sue inclinazioni politiche, in particolare per la sua adesione al marxismo.

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Sally Rooney is known for her strong political [leanings](#). In a 2021 interview, she mentioned that she views the world “mostly through a sort of Marxist [framework](#).” In her work, Rooney moves away from the idea of a [self](#)-sustaining, unaffected individual who remains unchanged by the people in their life. Instead, she portrays how both we and our worlds are shaped by our relationships and even just contact with one another. For Rooney, there is no [self](#) without others. This understanding of how interconnected we are reflects her Marxist perspective: philosopher and economist Karl Marx’s analysis presents a view of the world— and the [self](#)— as being shaped by relations, specifically class relations, which are usually conflictive. She believes that conditions are always influenced by, and have consequences for, the rest of us. **Sally Rooney:** I always find it interesting when people say “That’s an interesting character” or “That’s a good character” because I don’t think a character has any intrinsic value. I mean, every person is intrinsically interesting, but in a novel, what gives a character power is their relation to others and how those relations change. And that for me is like, what I’m so fascinated by.

## SOCIAL LIFE

Despite her political ideology, Rooney does not write her novels as coded political manifestos. Rather, she is a descriptive, observant author. She has stated that if she wanted to write a political manifesto, she simply would. She also distinguishes her [self](#) from sections of the political left that place culture at the centre of their activism, questioning the relevance or impact of being a writer or of novels themselves. Rooney went on discussing the role of the novel in relation to capitalism. **Sally Rooney:** I think that the novel persists in part because it emerged from the absolute rupture of social life

that capitalism inflicted on the really stable hierarchies of the feudal system. And we're still, in a sense, living with those same disruptions, those extreme disruptions to human social life and social relationships that capitalism inflicts. And although the novel emerged from a [bourgeois](#) point of view, I think it still has the capacity to document the pressures [exerted](#) by economic life on the subjectivity of the individual, and that's part of what makes it such a persistent form. Like people are still reading novels. I'm still reading them and I still love novels that are published today, so I feel like it can't be dead yet. And I do think that the kinds of problems of the 18th, [early-19th](#) century that [gave rise](#) to the novel form in many ways are the problems that continue [to haunt](#) us today because we're still living in that long, capitalist era.

## PRIVATE LIFE

Surprisingly for a public figure of her generation, Rooney is not on social media and keeps her private life away from the public eye. However, she has been [outspoken](#) on certain issues and taken public action. An [advocate](#) for abortion rights, Rooney also supports the peaceful Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement against the State of Israel, which demands [compliance](#) with international law. She refused to sell the Hebrew translation rights for her previous novel *Beautiful World, Where Are You* to Israeli publisher Modan—who had published her two first books—and adopted the same [stance](#) for *Intermezzo*.

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# Glossary

- **framework** = quadro
- **self-sustaining** = autonomo
- **bourgeois** = borghese
- **early-19th** = principi del XIX secolo
- **gave rise** = dare luogo a
- **advocate** = sostenitrice
- **stance** = posizione
- **leanings** = inclinazioni
- **exerted** = esercitare
- **to haunt** = perseguire
- **outspoken** = esplicita
- **compliance** = rispetto
- **self** = identità, io