



# **"The Useless Mouths" and Other Literary Writings (Beauvoir Series)**

*Simone de Beauvoir*

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"The Useless Mouths" and Other Literary Writings brings to English-language readers literary writings--several previously unknown--by Simone de Beauvoir. Culled from sources including various American university collections, the works span decades of Beauvoir's career. Ranging from dramatic works and literary theory to radio broadcasts, they collectively reveal fresh insights into Beauvoir's writing process, personal life, and the honing of her philosophy.

The volume begins with a new translation of the 1945 play "The Useless Mouths," written in Paris during the Nazi occupation. Other pieces were discovered after Beauvoir's death in 1986, such as the 1965 short novel Misunderstanding in Moscow, involving an elderly French couple who confront their fears of aging. Two additional previously unknown texts include the fragmentary "Notes for a Novel," which contains the seed of what she later would call "the problem of the Other," and a lecture on postwar French theater titled "Existential Theater." The collection notably includes the eagerly awaited translation of Beauvoir's contribution to a 1965 debate among Jean-Paul Sartre and other French writers and intellectuals, "What Can Literature Do?"

Prefaces to well-known works such as Bluebeard and Other Fairy Tales, La Bâtarde, and James Joyce in Paris: His Final Years are also available in English for the first time, alongside essays and other short articles. A landmark contribution to Beauvoir studies and French literary studies, the volume includes informative and engaging introductory essays by prominent and rising scholars.

Contributors are Meryl Altman, Elizabeth Fallaize, Alison S. Fell, Sarah Gendron, Dennis A. Gilbert, Laura Hengehold, Eleanore Holveck, Terry Keefe, J. Debbie Mann, Frederick M. Morrison, Catherine Naji, Justine Sarrot, Liz Stanley, Ursula Tidd, and Veronique Zaytzeff.

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