



***Re-Writing Women into Canadian History:
Margaret Atwood and Anne Hébert***

Elodie Rousselot

Essai en anglais

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Focusing on two 20th century Canadian major female authors of distinct cultural and linguistic backgrounds, *Re-Writing Women into Canadian History: Margaret Atwood and Anne Hébert* addresses the central role they each give to Canadian history. By assessing the ways in which each author attempts to “re-write” Canadian history in order to create a specifically female historical space, Dr Elodie Rousselot shows that both Margaret Atwood (1939-) and Anne Hébert (1916-2000) have successfully given a voice to traditionally oppressed female figures.

With a careful analysis of socio-economical backgrounds (19th and 20th centuries), Dr Rousselot sheds light on the delicate balance both authors have been able to create between History and the private life of their characters. The immense talent of these internationally acclaimed authors (Atwood won the Booker Prize in 2000; Hébert won the Femina in 1982) is highlighted by Dr Rousselot in a way that will make readers go back to these works of art with renewed interest and curiosity.

Elodie Rousselot’s analysis focuses on Margaret Atwood’s *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* and *Grace*, an unpublished play, as well as on her novel *Alias Grace*. She also examines Anne Hébert’s novel *Kamouraska*, and two plays: *La Cage* and *L’Île de la Demoiselle*. Finally, Anne Hébert’s success in establishing a Quebecois “herstory” is assessed through the analysis of her 1988 novel *Le Premier Jardin*.

En s’intéressant à la construction narrative historique mise en œuvre par Anne Hébert et Margaret Atwood, Elodie Rousselot montre comment ces deux auteures majeures du 20^e siècle ont donné la parole à des personnages féminins traditionnellement silencieux. Grâce à une mise en contexte éclairante, l’auteure de cette analyse précise et généreuse démontre que c’est par le biais d’une « réécriture » de l’histoire que la parole des femmes a pu se faire entendre. Leur lecture de l’histoire du Canada et du Québec s’inscrit dans une volonté de transmettre une *herstory*, un récit historique qui n’exclut pas la parole et la présence féminines.

Dr Elodie Rousselot is a Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the School of Social, Historical and Literary Studies of the University of Portsmouth. Her monograph *Re-Writing Women into Canadian History: Margaret Atwood and Anne Hébert* has been awarded the Prix scientifique Anne-Hébert by the Centre Anne-Hébert, University of Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada.