

contemporary rhetoric would lead us to believe." She maintains that while women and their experiences as mothers are indeed diverse, the commonality of these very real experiences are often devalued and, hence, overlooked in the Canadian legal system. Turnbull contends that the court's tendency to ignore the realities of women and their unique stories as mothers (which she describes using the term "motherwork") contributes to the low socioeconomic status of "differently situated mothers." She states quite clearly that the law in Canada does not support mothers and that because of this, "mothers pay twice for the children they have chosen to mother. This is double jeopardy."

Before Turnbull begins her critique of the relevant case law at hand, she provides the reader with an overview of basic Canadian legal concepts (such as *stare decisis*) as well as prominent feminist theories including liberal feminism, radical feminism, cultural feminism, and postmodernism in her first chapter entitled "Regulating Mothers." *Double Jeopardy* then goes on to discuss four separate, yet interrelated, areas of law and how these areas of law affect motherwork. For example, one of Turnbull's chapters, "Seeing Mothers: Invisibility and Poverty," discusses the social and economic conditions in which mothers in Canada live. Her next chapters, "Becoming Mothers: Pregnancy and the Law," "Being Mothers: The Legal Characterization of Motherwork," and "Taxing Mothers: Income-Tax Rules and Motherwork," provide much deeper legal critiques of the common law. Turnbull presents the most recent and relevant law in these respective areas and critically analyzes paramount cases—such as *Dobson v. Dobson*, *Winnipeg Child and Family Services (Northwest Area) v. G. (D.F.)*, *Tremblay v. Daigle*, *Brockie v. Brockie*, *Willick v. Willick* and *Miglin v. Miglin*—in a way that is both relevant and enlightening. As well, Turnbull deconstructs various statu-

tory and legislative schemes such as the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Criminal Code*, and the *Income Tax Act*, and discusses how these acts have had, and will continue to have, profound effects on mothers. The last two chapters of the work, "Supporting Mothers: Strategies for Change" and "Justice for Mothers: Reforming Law," focus on the difficulties and challenges associated with seeking transformation (rather, she notes, than 'reformation') in the Canadian legal system.

Many things work well in *Double Jeopardy*. Of particular interest is the way in which Turnbull combines comments and criticisms of case law with feminist theory. Her ideas are cutting-edge and should easily engage both legal and theoretical minds. Undoubtedly, it is a work to be celebrated. However, Turnbull misses a golden opportunity to critique the effects of alternative dispute resolution systems, such as mediation and collaborative law, which are seeing a continuing increase in popularity. It would seem that a scholar of Turnbull's esteem should note the impact of such resolution systems and their influence on the quantity and quality of case law (and for that matter, statutory reform). While these mechanisms are welcomed in so far as they may be more accommodating for women—in that alternative dispute systems are more accessible and timely, less costly and far less intrusive into women's lives—the fact remains that these schemes do nothing to transform, let alone reform, the case law. Further, as more alternative dispute resolution systems are preferred, this places a much higher responsibility on the few cases that are litigated in our courts with respect to motherwork. Given Turnbull's acute awareness and clear insight into the topic at hand, it would have been instructive for her to have commented on and explored this pressing issue.

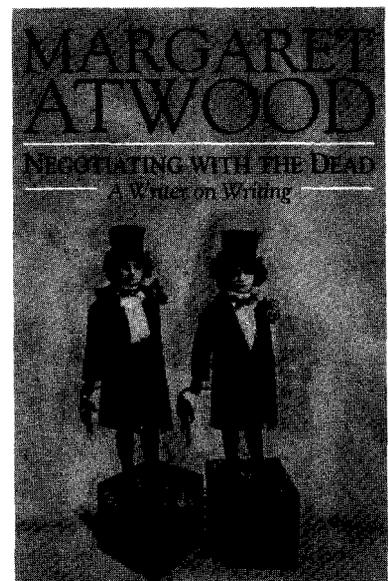
Nevertheless, *Double Jeopardy* is a work which should be found on every bookshelf. For the feminist legal

scholar, the monograph provides a very good analysis of the historical developments of the current case law in Canada and provides a clever and well-articulated synopsis of the intersection between feminist and legal theory. For the demographic that is ignorant of the realities of motherwork and the law, Turnbull's work will be sure to enlighten and rescue them from their ignorance.

NEGOTIATING WITH THE DEAD: A WRITER ON WRITING

Margaret Atwood.
Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2002.

BY SHERRILL CHEDA



Once upon a time, like the Brontë siblings, Margaret Atwood and her brother made up fanciful stories and told them to each other as children. And from these narrative beginnings came the writer, we, as readers, think we know today. This dazzling book of six essays about the writing life, both erudite and witty, down to earth while literary, insightful, and practical, began life as the Epton lectures at Cambridge University.

This is a book about what Atwood has learned from other writers, both living and dead. As in her fiction, her brilliant thinking and sense of humour make this a joy to read.

Atwood points out that all authors are doubles because they live with two people: their everyday selves and their writer selves. Both of these selves need to be practical and have concerns about money and the question "How am I going to live?" It is her opinion that because the person who wrote the book has become someone else by the time she finishes it, a reader can really never meet the actual author of a book.

In a chapter entitled "Temptation: Prospero, the Wizard of Oz, Mephisto & Co.," which is about art, power, and social responsibility, Atwood looks at art as religion and poets as gods, saints, priests, geniuses, all powerful and "good." In these tales, it is necessary for the artist to sacrifice and suffer for art. The opposite side of this narrative is one in which writers loathe themselves or sell out to the devil/market/money or are loathed by others as evidenced from Plato to fatwas. Atwood notes the difference between men and women writers: "...because the kind of eccentricity expected of male 'geniuses' would simply result in the label 'crazy' should it be practiced by a woman." When considering social responsibility, Atwood looks at the F-word, "feminism."

In "Communion: Nobody to Nobody; the eternal triangle: the writer, the reader and the book as go between," Atwood raises three questions: 1) For whom does the writer write? 2) Where is the writer when the reader is reading? 3) What is the book's function? There are many answers to these questions, one of which is to "produce order out of chaos."

In her last chapter, "Descent: Negotiating with the dead. Who makes the trip to the underworld and why," her premise is that all narrative writing is motivated by a fear of and fascination with mortality. Atwood

explores sacrifices in literature and myth and who it is that wants blood (the dead, gods, and vampires). She also delves into why the dead are so attractive. They have riches, knowledge, a chance to battle an evil monster and, last but not least, a chance to find the loved and the lost.

Writing is a way to imagine the dead and bring them back to life (Gilgamesh, Greek myths, Virgil, Dante). Atwood asks, "Where does a writer find a story?" and answers: in

the dark; that is why inspiration is thought of as coming in flashes. Writers must make a descent into this darkness to find the skeletons. All writers learn from the dead who came before them. "All writers must go from *now* to *once upon a time*."

Negotiating with the Dead is Margaret Atwood at her best. It is strong and persuasive without being difficult. And, as always, she is perceptive about art and artifice.

Studies in Political Economy

NOT FOR FAT CATS
(They just can't digest it.)

A Canadian scholarly journal providing detailed analysis of current issues and informed commentary on topics in Canadian and international political economy

A complete list of back issues is available at www.carleton.ca/spe

Subscriptions to SPE:

1 year	2 years
Student, Senior, Unwaged	—
\$20	
Regular	\$70
\$40	
Sustaining	\$100
\$60	
Institutions	\$175
\$100	

For orders shipped outside Canada, please pay full amount in US funds

In Our Current Issue

Tribute to Pierre Bourdieu; The Child and New Labour in the UK; Citizenship as a Social Policy Concept: Neoclassical, Institutional, and Marxist Approaches to the Economics-Environment Relationship; Uniting the Party Left and the Social Left; The Problem with Capitalism

In Upcoming Issues

Political Economy and Canada's Foreign Economic Policy; Political Ecology; Dollarization

Studies in Political Economy: A Socialist Review, SR 303 Carleton University
1125 Colonel By Drive Ottawa Ontario Canada K1S 5B6. www.carleton.ca/spe