



A Desire for Women: Relational Psychoanalysis, Writing, and Relationships between Women

Suzanne Juhasz

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This book explores women's desire for women as it is located in examples of twentieth-century British and American women's writing, including fiction, memoir, and poetry by such writers as Virginia Woolf, Vivian Gornick, Dorothy Allison, Mary Gordon, Toni Morrison, Marilyn Hacker, and Audre Lorde. Suzanne Juhasz discusses how literary writing functions to enact and negotiate a series of relationships between women: daughter-mother, mother-daughter, lesbian lover-lesbian lover, writer-reader, and reader-writer. She shows how writing is a component of interpersonal relationships and how relationships are central to the construction of personal and social identity.

Uniquely weaving together psychoanalytic, feminist, queer, and literary theory as well as memoir to examine the value and meaning of relationships between women, Juhasz explores the writings of adult daughters, mothers, and lovers to consider how language both traces and shapes the contours of experience. She emphasizes the initial bond between mother and infant as the bedrock of identity formation, a process involving love, recognition, desire, and language, and shows how that relationship serves as source and model for all future loves.

Juhasz's lucid prose unravels the meaningful yet overlooked intricacies of the relationships that inflect much of women's writing in the twentieth century.

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