



Excess and Transgression in Simone de Beauvoir's Fiction

The Discourse of Madness

Alison Holland, Northumbria University, UK



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Alison Holland's innovative book fills a gap in Beauvoir studies by focusing on the writer's frequently neglected novels and short stories, *L'Invitée*, *Les Mandarins*, *Les Belles Images*, and *La Femme rompue*. In illuminating the density and rich complexity of Beauvoir's style, Holland challenges the often accepted view that Beauvoir's writing is flat, detached, and controlled, revealing, rather, that her prose is frequently disrupted and inflected by forceful emotion. Holland shows that excess and transgression are intrinsic qualities of the texts, and argues that Beauvoir's textual strategies duplicate madness in her fiction. Holland's reading of Beauvoir's fiction demonstrates the extent to which Beauvoir's fiction undermines an ideologically patriarchal position on language. Her study is important not only for its re-evaluation of Beauvoir as a fiction writer but for its contribution to the wider debate on madness and literature.

Contents

Introduction; *L'Invitée*; *Les Mandarins*; *Les Belles Images*; *La Femme rompue*; Postscript; Bibliography; Index.

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