



Herspace: Women, Writing, and Solitude (Haworth Innovations in Feminist Studies)

J Dianne Garner, Victoria Boynton, Jo Malin

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This collection delves deeply into the power of solitude in a richly detailed exploration of the lives of women writers!

The essays in this fascinating volume combine literary theory, autobiography, performance, and criticism, while opening minds and expanding concepts of women's roles both in the home and within academia along the way. *Herspace: Women, Writing, and Solitude* begins with a discussion of the importance of solitude to the works of a variety of writers, including Margaret Atwood, May Sarton, Virginia Woolf, Marguerite Duras, and Zora Neale Hurston, and then moves on to an examination of the actual solitary spaces of women writers. The book concludes with the stories of modern women asserting their right to a space of their own. These essays, full of pain and new growth, lessons learned and battles fought, resound with the honesty and courage the authors have found in the process of truly making their own homes.

Herspace examines:

- the stereotyped spinster
- solitude as a process and a journey
- women's prison literature
- cars, empty nests, kitchen counters, and other found spaces for writing
- the meaning of a home of one's own
- creating beauty in solitary settings

Contributors to *Herspace* have made a conscious effort to integrate the personal with the academic, and the result is a volume of surprising intimacy, a window into the world of women writers past and present actively engaging solitude. From finding and defining the muse to the identity issues of home ownership, *Herspace*, which includes Jan Wellington's essay "What to Make of Missing Children (A Life Slipping into Fiction)," (winner of the 2003 NCTE Donald Murray Prize for "the best creative essay about teaching and/or writing published during the preceding year") provides you with the perspectives of women who are living these issues.

As the editors write: "The solitary space itself enables the writing process, protects it. And women, more than men, need this enabling protection. Women need to claim their own space, to bargain and plan and keep out of sight that solitary space in which to commune with their thoughts and feelings, to experience their creative process intimately." *Herspace* explores these women's experiences, revealing the unique creativity that comes from solitude.

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