



# **Violence and the Female Imagination: Quebec's Women Writers Re-frame Gender in North American Cultures**

*Paula Ruth Gilbert*

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In the past twenty years Quebec women writers, including Aline Chamberland, Claire De, Suzanne Jacob, and Helene Rioux, have created female characters who are fascinated with bold sexual actions and language, cruelty, and violence, at times culminating in infanticide and serial killing. Paula Ruth Gilbert argues that these Quebec feminist writers are "re-framing" gender. *Violence and the Female Imagination* explores whether these imagined women are striking out at an external other or harming themselves through acts of self-destruction and depression. Gilbert examines the degree to which women are imitating men in the outward direction of their anger and hostility and suggests that such "tough" women may be mocking men in their "macho" exploits of sexuality and violence. She illustrates the ways in which Quebec female authors are "feminizing" violence or re-envisioning gender in North American culture. Gilbert bridges methodological gaps and integrates history, sociology, literary theory, feminist theory, and other disciplinary approaches to provide a framework for the discussion of important ethical and aesthetic questions.

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