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Intertextuality in the Works of Anne Hebert: The Relationship Between Poetic Voice, Narrative Voice, and Feminine Voice

Karla Stoesser
Illinois Wesleyan University

Scott Sheridan, Faculty Advisor
Illinois Wesleyan University

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Oral Presentation 3.3

**INTERTEXTUALITY IN THE WORKS OF ANNE HEBERT:
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POETIC VOICE, NARRATIVE
VOICE, AND FEMININE VOICE**

Karla Stoesser and Scott Sheridan*

Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures / French
Illinois Wesleyan University

The works of Québécois writer Anne Hébert (1916-2000) present a fascinating look into the possibilities of literary intertextuality. The concept of intertextuality, which rejects the traditional notion that texts are finite creations, with stable meanings, is based upon the assumption that texts are by their very nature fragments, with tensions and ambiguities that cannot be resolved. Language is no longer perceived as a transparent medium of thought, and since closure in texts is not possible, no text is autonomous. Such is the case with Hébert's works, particularly the interplay between her poetry and her prose. In specific, poems from her 1953 collection LeTombeau des Rois play an important role in later works such as her 1982 novel Les Fous de Bassan. Hébert weaves a haunting tale of murder from the perspective of a young girl, Olivia, while directly using poetic verse published almost thirty years before. It is through the use of a poetic voice that Hébert is able to defy traditional norms of psychological realism and temporality, and arrives at a unique narrative voice that is collectively shared by many female characters in her works.