

The Unraveling Archive: Essays on Sylvia Plath



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"Up to the minute and also deeply historicized—each reading of Plath's poems is grounded in and examines larger patterns in her work or in the cultural reception of her writing."

—Susan Van Dyne, Smith College

"Anita Helle's collection of largely new essays on Sylvia Plath updates the continuing process of the important evaluation of her many-faceted works. I especially like the way established critics are juxtaposed with younger/newer scholars: the dialogue Helle creates here is appropriately exciting."

—Linda Wagner-Martin, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Since Sylvia Plath's spectacular poems were announced to the world nearly a half century ago, fascination with the poet has never waned. In the past decade alone, Plath has been the subject of a new cultural explosion of interest—there have been novels, a feature film, and an array of public conferences, performances, and exhibitions, creating new conversations among different generations of scholars and readers. But because the posthumous record was incomplete—and in some cases, altered—the variety of distinctive materials Plath brought to her poetry has only recently been understood.

The publication of Plath's *Unabridged Journals*, a "restored edition" of her Ariel poems, and Ted Hughes's Birthday Letters, along with fresh attention to archives of periodical and popular culture, have provoked new readings of Plath and shed new light on her creative life and art. The Unraveling Archive provides a new assessment of Plath's creative life and work in light of an abundance of new material, offering essays that respond to new discoveries about familiar and neglected works.

The book includes reproductions of two of Plath's original paintings from the 1950s and photographs rarely seen before, along with essays by Janet Badia, Tracy Brain, Marsha Bryant, Lynda K. Bundtzen, Kathleen Connors, Sandra Gilbert, Anita Helle, Ann Keniston, Diane Middlebrook, Kate Moses, and Robin Peel.

Anita Helle is Associate Professor of English at Oregon State University.



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