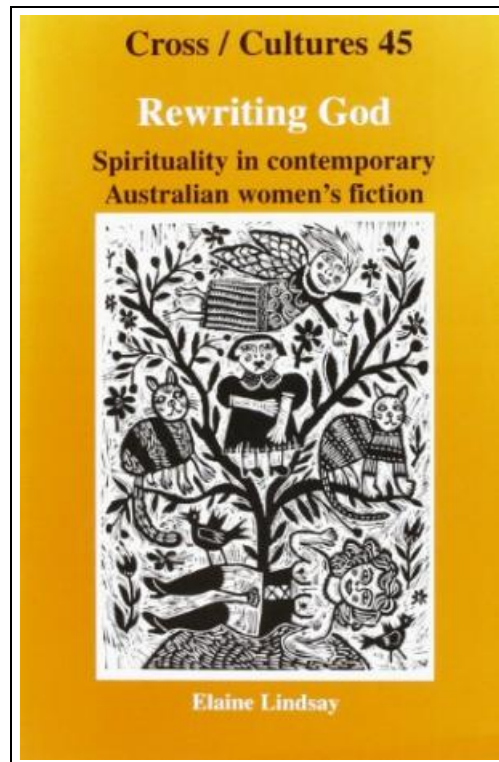


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REWRITING GOD: SPIRITUALITY IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN WOMEN S FICTION

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Brill, Netherlands, 2000. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 216 x 147 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Women are rarely if ever mentioned in commentaries upon Australian Christianity and spirituality. Only exceptional women are recognized as authorities on religious matters. Why is this so? Does it matter? Don t people from the same religious tradition share similar experiences of the divine, regardless of their gender? Rewriting God asks whether women have been writing about the divine and whether their insights are different from those contained in malestream accounts of Australian Christianity and spirituality. An analysis of the writings of popular theologians and religious commentators over the last twenty years suggests that the most popular form of spirituality among Australian theologians is Desert Spirituality. An analysis of women s autobiographical writings, however, suggests that the desert is irrelevant to many women s spiritual experiences. This book, through a close investigation of the fictions of Thea Astley, Elizabeth Jolley and Barbara Hanrahan, attempts to posit alternative forms of women s spirituality and to signal ways in which this spirituality is already being expressed. From the evidence gathered here, it becomes obvious that traditional expressions of Australian Christianity and spirituality are gender-specific and that they have functioned to deny women s religious experiences and to silence their claims to equality in the sight and service of the divine. It becomes obvious, too, that women have been developing their own forms of religious expression and that these may be expected to supplant gradually withering images of Desert Spirituality. Whether this new imagery will strengthen Australian Christianity or whether it merely marks a decline in the authority of Christianity remains a moot point.

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