

Student:

November 26th, 2012

Subject: English

“And by the same token, there is no such thing as an author, that is to say, one who originates a work of fiction *ab nihilo*. Every text is a product of intertextuality, a tissue of allusions to and citations of other texts; and, in the famous words of Jacques Derrida (famous to people like Robyn, anyway), ‘*il n’y a pas de hors-texte*’, there is nothing outside the text. There are no origins, there is only production, and we produce our ‘selves’ in language. Not ‘*you are what you eat*’ but ‘*you are what you speak*’ or, rather ‘*you are what speaks you*’, is the axiomatic basis of Robyn’s philosophy, which she would call, if required to give it a name, ‘semiotic materialism’” (from D. Lodge, *Nice Work*)

Winterson argues that any reading or writing of the past is always a re-reading and a re-writing of it, and telling always transforms past history, is transformed into a story that escapes the true or false binary logic. Thus, the past becomes a source of stories that can be told and re-told in a number of ways. At every new attempt at writing her own life-history, Winterson therefore fashions a new life story, using her past as much as her past stories as an intertextual basis from which to start.

(from F. Ferrari, *Re-writing the story – Jeanette Winterson’s Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?* and the role of storytelling in autobiography.)

Compare the quotations