

JOSÉ FRANCISCO FERNÁNDEZ

A Complex Kind of Feminism: Margaret Drabble's "A Success Story"

Abstract: The present article is an attempt to reassess English novelist Margaret Drabble in relation to women's issues. She has usually been termed as a writer who presents an ambiguous stance towards feminism and this view has been heavily influenced by her characterization as a moral writer. However a richer and more complex view of her writing can be achieved by paying attention to her career as a whole and to a tenuous sensuousness which now and then appears in her work. The starting point is a letter to Margaret Drabble written by Saul Bellow which has never been published and in which the American novelist complains about his portrayal as a failed seducer in Drabble's short piece "A Success Story" (1972). The disclosing of this previously unknown letter also provides the opportunity for new insights into the publishing milieu in Britain in the 1960s and 1970s.