

Atwood

CHILDHOOD

- Born in WW2 had impacts on writing
- She was born on 18 November, 1939 in Ottawa, Canada
- Began writing at 5-6 years old
 - Passionate about literature and found writing to be an escape
- 16 years old she committed her career to writing
- Her first major work was titled '*The Circle Game*', in which Atwood ponders human behaviour, celebrates the natural world, and condemns materialism.
 - She uses this critical tone often in her other works.
- She is a scorio.
- She was a feminist from a young age, and has incorporated her feminist beliefs into many of her writings.
- Grew up in a Canadian culture that struggled with their identity

IMPORTANT FACTS

- Wrote poetry collections
 - Past works: *Double Persephone* (1961), *The circle Game* (1964), *The Animals in That Country* (1968)
 - Influenced writing style in *The Handmaid's Tale*
 - Writes in an exact, vivid, and witty style in both prose and poetry
- Interested in Human Behavior → plays into *The Handmaid's Tale*
- Won the Booker Prize in 2000 for *The Blind Assassin*
- She lived in West Berlin during the Cold War, and says this wasn't a primary inspiration for *The Handmaid's Tale*.
- She claims to be a terrible speller

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Purpose

- Wrote in West Berlin during time of Berlin Wall
- Personal First hand accounts of oppressive dictatorships and censorship, etc caused her to write about totalitarian government dangers
 - Saw how governments/regimes can collapse overnight
- Wanted to write on the marginalization of women
- Shed light on the dangers of the far right and religious fundamentalist mindsets that she saw all around the world similar to the one she saw happening in Iran
- Practitioner of “speculative fiction”, and many of her novels were created words that are based loosely off of our own whether in the future if things don’t change, or based off the ideas of certain unsavory individuals.
- Influenced by other dystopian works: 1984

Significant Quotes

“Don't let the bastards grind you down.”

“War is what happens when language fails.”

“In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt.”

“Men are afraid that women will laugh at them. Women are afraid that men will kill them.”

“A word after a word after a word is power.”

“Another belief of mine: that everyone else my age is an adult, whereas I am merely in disguise.”

“Ignoring isn't the same as ignorance, you have to work at it.”

“An eye for an eye only leads to more blindness.”

“I would like to be the air that inhabits you for a moment only. I would like to be that unnoticed and that necessary.”

“The Eskimos had fifty-two names for snow because it was important to them: there ought to be as many for love.”