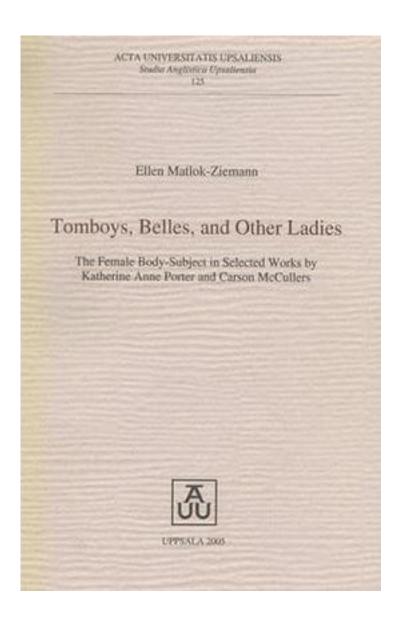
Tomboys, Belles & Other Ladies



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出版者:Uppsala Universitet

出版时间:2005-08-30

装帧:Paperback

isbn:9789155461850

This is a Ph.D. dissertation. Even active young girls are pressured into becoming beautiful but submissive women. In patriarchal society these pressures severely limit women's possibilities of holding responsible positions.

Is it then possible not to become a woman? What would such a refusal entail and what would one become instead? This study investigates how the Southern writers Katherine Anne Porter and Carson McCullers negotiate in their texts the process of becoming a woman.

Both writers express a deep concern about how becoming a lady affects women in the South and reveal the mechanisms that pressure girls into womanhood. Significantly, these mechanisms constitute the conception of women's identity, a process which I discuss in the framework of Simone de Beauvoir's ideas.

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