

Public Abstract

First Name:Kalyn

Middle Name:Rochelle

Last Name:Baldrige

Adviser's First Name:Carol

Adviser's Last Name:Lazzaro-Weis

Co-Adviser's First Name:

Co-Adviser's Last Name:

Graduation Term:SP 2016

Department:French

Degree:PhD

Title:L'AUGUSTE AUTRICHIENNE

REPRESENTATIONS OF MARIE

ANTOINETTE IN 19th CENTURY FRENCH LITERATURE AND HISTORY

This is a literary research project that examines nineteenth-century French texts that dealt with the life and times of Marie-Antoinette, commonly referred to as the Last Queen of France. Previous research on this queen has focused on her vilification in pamphlets published before the French Revolution which inevitably lead to her death. This study differs in that it reveals texts meant to reinsert Marie-Antoinette into French literature after an execution ended her life at age thirty-eight. This study, thus deals with the literature meant to bring the queen back to life.

Since her death in 1793, writers of all genres have attempted to re-write the story of Marie-Antoinette in a way that reveals their version of the truth. In the nineteenth-century especially, accounts of Marie-Antoinette abounded. This study examines eleven of these works asking questions such as: How was Marie-Antoinette portrayed in this work; What was the overriding goal of the author; Was it of a political nature; Did he/she have a personal agenda; When was this work published; Was his/her portrayal of Marie-Antoinette, in anyway, influenced by the time period in which he/she was writing; Which identities of Marie-Antoinette had preceded the identities formed in this work; Does this author make use of previously published sources?; If so, which ones?; Do future authors use this author's point of view?; If so, where and how it is manifested?

By answering these questions for each examined text, this study determines to reveal how authors from various moments in the nineteenth century were either motivated to construct a certain identity for Marie-Antoinette, or were using Marie-Antoinette's constructed identities for their own means. In doing so, the study will reveal the amazing power of the myth as a factor in historical and national memory, and why these stories have persisted for so long.