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# REVIEWS

## TITLE INFORMATION

### **A LOVE LIKE NO OTHER**

*Abigail & John Adams, A Modern Love Story*

Nancy Taylor Robson

CreateSpace (382 pp.)

\$16.99 paperback, \$6.99 e-book

ISBN: 978-1-4793-5803-8; February 15, 2013

## BOOK REVIEW

Abigail Adams experiences abiding love but many challenges in her union with her husband, John, in this historical novel inspired by their letters.

The story begins with a flash-forward: Abigail at the deathbed of her destitute, alcoholic adult son, Charles. The narrative then jumps to the late 1750s, introducing teenage Abigail Smith, more eager to read and discuss ideas than achieve perfect stitching, capturing the attention of an ambitious young lawyer named John Adams. The two marry in 1764, and Abigail is beset with child-rearing and managing the Massachusetts family farm while John drums up legal business and then becomes a key—and much traveling—figure in the American Revolution. They endure many separations, with John away for years in positions abroad, although Abigail eventually joins him in Paris and then London, bringing their daughter Nabby, who makes a terrible marriage choice. Abigail gains fame as John's wife and forges a friendship with Thomas Jefferson, but also suffers much heartbreak, including the toddler death of one daughter, the stillbirth of another, and the Smith curse of alcoholism that will claim Charles. Abigail also unsuccessfully argues for more rights for women in her political discussions with John. Still, Abigail realizes that John remains true to her (unlike her adulterous father) and important to the country. Following John's tenure as U.S. president, the couple enjoy many years in retirement together in their Quincy, Massachusetts, home. While many readers (and TV viewers) may be familiar with the Adams saga, Robson (*Woman in the Wheelhouse*, 2016, etc.) offers an intriguing "herstory" perspective, given her focus on Abigail. The author makes Abigail's tension while being stuck at home palpable, with her prime years spent in pregnancy and her famous plea to "remember the ladies" apparently ignored in her world, even by her loving husband. Abigail's guilt over her parenting choices also strikes a sad and ever-relevant chord. While some may wish for more color and details about John and other American Revolution figures, Robson offers a compelling, documentarylike snapshot of the real life of this legendary woman.

A finely shaded portrait of a first lady's yearnings and travails.

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