

Reviews

To what extent do you agree with each review?

1. Rank the reviews, with the one that most reflects your own understanding of the collection at the top down to the one that is least like your own opinions.
2. Illustrate your decisions by finding quotations and examples from the collection.

1. "By turns humorous and warm, stark and frightening, *Bluebeard's Egg* glows with childhood memories, the reality of parents growing old, and the casual cruelty men and women inflict on each other ... In this dramatic and far-ranging collection, Margaret Atwood proves why she is a true master of the genre."

From <http://www.luminarium.org/contemporary/atwood/bluebeard.htm>

2. "Confronting a collection by, say, Raymond Carver or Alice Munro or Amy Hempel, we expect the thoughtfully selected and arranged components to produce a whole with a certain shapeliness of its own, a consistency of voice and tone, of subject matter and treatment. No such sense of a whole is to be found in Margaret Atwood's second collection, "Bluebeard's Egg," which first appeared in a Canadian edition last year; instead, she has given us a book of unmatched parts, an assemblage of short memoirs, fictionalized character studies and a handful of stories that seem almost willful in their nonconformity to any of the current patterns of that genre."

From the *New York Times*, 1986

3. "Atwood's writing is formidably disciplined; she keeps her characters at a distance ... Like the artist in her story, Atwood sketches the "imperfect flesh" of those who "show signs of the forces acting upon them, who have been chipped a little, rained on, frayed, like shells on the beach." Not beautiful people, these characters, but in the author's quick hands they are something far more intriguing and valuable: they are alive."

From *Time* magazine, 1987

4. "If anyone has better insight into women and their central problem – men – than Margaret Atwood, and can voice them with as much wit, impact and grace, then they haven't started writing yet."

From the *Daily Mail*

5. "Sophisticated, reticent, ornate, stark, supple, stiff, savage or forgiving ... they are stories from the prime of life."

From the *Times Literary Supplement*

6. "An outstanding correspondent on the war between the sexes writes as wittily as ever on the hopes and shortcomings of women who bake for poets, sleep with their accountants, attribute their preference for awful men to fearlessness, and don't know how much they scare their own mothers."

From the *Observer*