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Queer reading,queer writing

de Waal, Shaun André

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QUEER READING, QUEER WRITING

MA dissertation comprising a combination of creative writing and theoretical reflection

Shaun André de Waal

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MA in Writing.

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Abstract

This MA dissertation uses “queer theory” to read existing literary texts and to inform the writing of new fictional works. In the opening literary-critical essay, which functions as an introduction to queer theory, I give an overview of its development and conceptual formation, then go on to demonstrate how it may provide useful and fruitful readings of a writer such as William Burroughs.

The central and longest section of this dissertation is a group of short fictions that engage with queer theory, using some of its insights to generate investigations of sexuality, power, social relations, and to inspire formal experiments in keeping with the spirit of queer theory.

In conclusion, I look back upon this group of short fictional texts and link them to the issues raised in the essay on Burroughs and queer theory.

Keywords

queer

literary

theory

gender

sexuality

identity

gay

lesbian

Burroughs

Russell

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of MA in Writing in the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

. . . . . .

Shaun André de Waal

14th day of February, 2005

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