

Dueck, Nathan Russel. *He'll: Parody in the Canadian Poetic Novel*. Thesis (PhD [English]), University of Calgary. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI, 2010. (Publication No. NR64097)

Abstract

This dissertation considers literary parody as reading in performance. If we accept that parody reads its source texts, we also acknowledge the potential for a performative reading of these sources. Literary parody is not only citation, but a process of recitation as well. If so, parodic fiction that recites poetry embodies the structure, style, and tone of its source texts. I will attempt to examine the poetics of this performance trope through a particular form of parody. By parodying the cadences and intonations of poetic language, the “poetic novel” invites readers to enact the gestures of its textual performance.

If literary parody reads its sources, I propose that any subsequent act of reading constitutes rereading. Rereading a poetic novel requires that we must interpret the discursive ambiguity, even ambivalence, of poetry. In effect, poetic novels operate through *apostrophe* both to source texts and to readers. Such a rhetorical address relies on our identification with the *pathos* provoked by the self-referential qualities of poetic language. Supposing that parody is an occasion for reading in performance, the poetry within specific prose narratives affords a performative opportunity.

As its title suggests, this dissertation will relate the implications of parody to narratives by particular poet-novelists in Canada that cite and recite poetry. I will consider how parody manipulates literary conventions by looking at theories by Linda Hutcheon, Margaret Rose, and Robert Phiddian. I will perform a close reading of poetic novels by Leonard Cohen and Michael Ondaatje; Margaret Atwood, Jane Urquhart, and Anne Michaels; Robert Kroetsch; and finally, Malcolm Lowry.

“He'll” strives to embrace the ironies of parody that alternately asserts or subverts literary conventions, while simultaneously encouraging disjunctive readings of several poetic novels