Textual aporias: Exploring the perplexities of form and absence in Australian verse novels

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Abstract

Kerry Mallan and Roderick McGillis have collaborated on a groundbreaking article exploring verse novels generally and Australian verse novels in particular. This article, valuable because it invites discussion rather than resolves issues, is a welcome companion to the growing number of verse novels appearing in several countries. It also explores the process of academic discourse by presenting a dialogue rather than the traditional formal monologue.

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Two ideas that surface repeatedly in post-colonial literature and theory are representation and resistance. Inevitably, scholars will judge a novel or poem by how adequately it represents an indigenous people or by how it reacts to the oppressing colonizers. Does Philip Jeyaretnam's Abraham's Promise serve as a statement against the remnants of a colonized Singapore or does it perpetuate the colonizing institutions of modern Singapore? This is one of the numerous questions scholars may ask when applying a theoretical study of post-colonial literature. Edward Said uses the term "