



Decolonising Gender: Literature and a Poetics of the Real (Routledge Research in Postcolonial Literatures)

Caroline Rooney

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Through examination of the functions of language and cross-cultural readings of literature – from African queer reading to postcolonial Shakespeare – Rooney explores the nature of the real, providing:

- a way out of some of the current deadlocks of feminist theory
- an anti-essentialist approach to gender in which both male and female readers may address a consciousness of the feminine
- a platform for postcolonial and postmodernist thinkers to engage in a dialogue around the status of the performative in regard to the other
- a new theory of poetic realism in both canonical and postcolonial literatures
- a re-reading of the Enlightenment legacy in terms of postcolonial liberation theory
- a comparison of contemporary debates on the real across the humanities and the sciences.

Exploring current ideas of performativity in literature and language, and negotiating a path between feminist theory's common pitfalls of essentialism and constructivism, Caroline Rooney argues convincingly that by rethinking our understanding of gender we might also equip ourselves to resist racism and totalitarianism more effectively.

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