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## REFERENCES

Cheryl Stobie. *Somewhere in the Double Rainbow: Representations of Bisexuality in Post-Apartheid Novels*. Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2007. xvi + 307 pp. ISBN 13: 978-1-86914-130-1. R 95

- 1 Long considered a “third choice” or simply an “invisible” way of being sexual bisexuality has now moved beyond its common association with “having your cake and eating it, too” to become a sexuality that undoes sexual orientation as a category and, more generally, “undoes genre,” as Judith Butler would have it. While most analysis of bisexuality has been confined to sexology and literary and cultural studies in western contexts, Cheryl Stobie’s unprecedented study applies a bisexual epistemology to South African novels after 1994, that is, in the Post-Apartheid era.
- 2 Stobie’s title conjures up both Judy Garland’s song in *The Wizard of Oz*, which projects Dorothy beyond her monochromatic Kansas dustbowl, and post-Apartheid South Africa or “Rainbow Nation” with its proffered multicultural bliss. In her introductory chapter, “Defining the Double Rainbow,” she reminds us of the sex-changing capacity of the rainbow in medieval folklore, of the Native Americans’ rainbow bridge, the Australian Aboriginal Rainbow Serpent myth, and the rainbow-coloured Pride flag. Beyond the six colours of the Pride flag and beyond the seven glowing colours of the rainbow, Cheryl Stobie presents us with eight chapters that rainbow-haze into a Conclusion on the crisis of representation in the South African Imaginary. In Chapter 2, she surveys the works of Krafft-Ebing, Havelock Ellis, and Freud up to Alfred Kinsey as well as Radclyffe Hall, Virginia Woolf, Hélène Cixous, Trinh Minh-Ha, Gloria Anzaldúa, Alice Walker, Jeanette

Winterson, Emma Donoghue, and Erica Jong, and in the process brings added nuance to Marjorie Garber's "category crisis" and Jonathan Dollimore's "wishful theory." She follows this detailed historical analysis in Chapter 3 with a discussion of the slippery avoidance of the term 'bisexual' in Murray and Roscoe's (1998) and Morgan and Wieringa's (2005) studies of alternative sexualities in Africa, and of some South African queer cultural productions made possible by the shift to democracy. The rainbow is double because of the study's imbrication of queer sexuality and race.

- 3 A cultural history of the bi term is outlined in Chapter 4. Stobie addresses the common elision of bisexuality in popular culture and film, which she contrasts with accounts in biographies and autobiographies of the past, arguing for a "biopic" reading of these lives. Even though Stobie is never gossipy, this reader could not help relish some of the anecdotes such as Raymond Radiguet's affair with Beatrice Hastings, who herself had a sparky affair with Katherine Mansfield and was the ambisexual object of the self-identified bisexual Stephen Gray's biography, while Radiguet was involved in a gay relationship with Jean Cocteau.
- 4 The remainder of Stobie's exquisitely written study is devoted to her literary analysis of texts, employing Marjorie Garber's conception of the "third" as a marker of psychic and cultural shift, as well as both Frantz Fanon's and Homi K. Bhabha's efforts to establish a "third space" as a national site of transformation and hope. The first three pre-Apartheid novels are the subject of Chapter 5, in which Tatamkhulu Afrika's semi-autobiographical *Bitter Eden* (2002) is compared with his autobiography *Mr Chameleon* (2005) so as to bring out bisexual desires and behaviour, if not yet full-fledged identities. Chapter 6 deals with the era of high apartheid and its construction of hegemonic masculinity in *Bildungsromane* such as *The Smell of Apples* (1995) and *Embrace* (2000) by Mark Behr. *Cracks* (1999) by Sheila Kohler features a 1950s butch femme whose paedophile abuse of one of her wards helps demonize the boundary-crossing Miss G. Stobie's casting of Miss G. as a bisexual may occlude the fact that she is primarily a lesbian; Stobie occasionally leaves little room for "wasbians," "maybians," and other interstitial ways of being sexual in the gender continuum.
- 5 The shift to democracy is addressed in Chapter 7, which tackles Achmat Dangor's *Bitter Fruit* (2001), Guy Willoughby's *Archangels* (2002), Michiel Heyns's *The Reluctant Passenger* (2003), and Nadine Gordimer's *The House Gun* (1998). Chapter 8 focuses on the visionary and the queer celebratory in K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2001) and Ashraf Jamal's *Love Themes for the Wilderness* (1996), both set in contemporary Cape Town, South Africa's mecca for alternative sexualities. Shamin Sarif's *The World Unseen* (2001), which could have been paired off with Kohler's *Cracks* on account of its coverage of the 1950s, is discussed in this chapter because of the theoretical constraints of the "double rainbow." Chapter 9 analyses Barbara Adair's *In Tangier They Killed the Blue Parrot* (2004), which moves beyond the partial or complete South African settings of the previous novels, to consider the lives of the expatriate American couple, Jane and Paul Bowles, in post-Second World War Morocco.
- 6 Among the book's few flaws, we number Stobie's reference to South Africa as "this country" (e.g. 67) or to "our collective history" (176), which shows that she is writing from within the belly of the beast but with asides to a South African readership. Also, Stobie's sophistication is at times marred by unnecessary subheadings with mundane titles (i.e. "the Characters," 245) or the (albeit seldom) uncritical acceptance of authors' biases such as Chinua Achebe's erroneous assessment of Conrad's "'fixation of

blackness" (252). Despite these quibbles, Stobie has amply made up for queer theory's elision of bisexuality and shown its role in shaping the new national imaginary beyond binary paradigms. Stobie thus confirms that South Africa under the New Constitution, with its current debates around human rights, sexuality and accountability, is one of the most appropriate testing terrains for the discussion of minority sexualities. However, in highlighting the Continent's need to put an end to internalised homophobia and conditioned heteronormativity outside of South Africa, Stobie may well be chasing rainbows.

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## AUTHORS

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**Chantal ZABUS** is Professor of Postcolonial Literatures and Cultures at the University Paris 13, a Researcher at the University of Paris 3-Sorbonne Nouvelle, and a Senior Scholar at the Institut universitaire de France. She is the author of *Between Rites and Rights: Excision in Women's Experiential Texts and Human Contexts* (Stanford UP, 2007); *The African Palimpsest* (Rodopi, 1991; rpt 2007); *Tempests after Shakespeare* (Palgrave, 2002). She has also edited *Le Secret* (with J. Derrida, Louvain, 1999), and *Changements au féminin en Afrique noire* (L'Harmattan, 2000). *Fearful Symmetries: Essays and Testimonies around Excision and Circumcision* is forthcoming with Rodopi this year, and she is currently editing *Perennial Empires* (with Silvia Nagy-Zekmi).