Pet Names

Connection and identity in second-person fiction.

Lauren Lovett

Vol 2:
Hello, is it you you’re looking for? Connection and identity in second-person fiction.

School of Humanities
Discipline of English and Creative Writing
University of Adelaide

Thesis
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Declaration

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Lauren Lovett                                                        Date
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Finally, I would like to thank my parents, Nadia and Trevor, and my partner Matt for their continual encouragement, advice and feedback. For their support, I am truly grateful.
Abstract

The creative work, Pet Names, is eight loosely interrelated narratives. Each narrative depicts the nuances and idiosyncrasies of a generic suburban character who fails to fulfil a need for interpersonal connection and self-satisfaction. The narratives are vignettes of each character’s daily life and include the mundane, irrational and absurd. The narratee/protagonist in Pet Names is addressed using the second-person pronoun.

The exegesis is entitled Hello, is it you you’re looking for? Connection and identity in second-person fiction. It comprises several analytical chapters that explore ways in which second-person narration not only complements but also highlights the thematic elements of a text that involve interpersonal connections and notions of self. The exegesis examines the second-person narrative works of authors Julio Cortazar, Miranda July and Lorrie Moore and analyses how these individual authors’ use of second-person narration reflects their rhetorical interests concerning interpersonal relations and definitions of selfhood. The exegesis cites a number of narrative theories concerning second-person narration and relates them to Pet Names and to the writings of the above-mentioned authors. Also included is a chapter on narrative empathy that deconstructs the complications involved in representing unempathetic characters. It debates whether reader-empathy is necessary in narrative, particularly in my own writing, where there is a questioning of narratorial ‘appropriateness’ by deploying challenging forms of address.
Hello, is it you you’re looking for?
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(Exegesis)
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