

Contents

Acknowledgements	vii
Foreword	ix
Introduction	1
Outline	8
Part 1: Negotiating the 'Beyond': Theoretical Considerations	9
Chapter 1: Exploring 'History' and 'Writing'	11
Defining 'history' and 'writing'	18
Chapter 2: Blankness, Irony, Ambivalence	24
Catachresis and mimicry	26
The 'Second World'	30
Chapter 3: The Post-Colonial Metanarrative	33
Limits to the post-colonial	39
Part 2: Significant Others: Modes of Knowledge and Resistance in	
Njabulo Ndebele's <i>Fools and Other Stories</i>	45
Chapter 4: 'Black' Writing in South Africa	47
Chapter 5: Ambivalence and Alienation	51
Chapter 6: Know the Write Thing	57
One morning at Springs Station	57
African education	60
'Universal' science	71
Chapter 7: Body Language	76
'Black' bodies	76
<i>Bildungsroman</i>	79
An 'imaginary' community	85
The nation as <i>Gemeinschaft</i>	88
Chapter 8: Disembodiment and Presence	95
Negating the body	95
Repositioning the body	102

Part 3: Trust Her? Ambivalent Singularity in Nadine Gordimer's	
<i>A Sport of Nature</i>	109
Chapter 9: Differing Interpretations of <i>A Sport of Nature</i>	111
Singularity	113
Chapter 10: Hillela as Sign	117
Naming	119
Narrative perspective on the margins	125
Progressive narrative perspective	130
Chapter 11: Hillela as Realistic Character	137
Trickster	137
The virtue of the body erotic	145
Chapter 12: Hillela as Allegory	150
The clutter of contemporaneity	151
Hedonism and factuality	152
Mapping the ersatz	157
A politics of style	168
Part 4: '... a wrong story, always wrong': Reading the Ethically Sublime	
in J.M. Coetzee's <i>Life & Times of Michael K</i>	179
Chapter 13: Critical Responses to <i>Life & Times of Michael K</i>	181
Reception and controversy	182
The ethics of reading	187
Blankness	189
Chapter 14: Lévinas and Passivity	193
Chapter 15: Michael K as Sovereign Subject	196
Other	196
Mother	197
Land	201
Motherland	206
Chapter 16: The Alterity of Michael K	211
Stupidity, drowsiness, difference	211
Chapter 17: The Plurality of Times	218
War as/through deconstruction	219
Place-names	228
Conclusion: Writing in Crisis	235
Notes	243
Select Bibliography	259
Index	269