

Reclaiming the Author



Figures

and

Fictions

from

Spanish

America

Lucille Kerr

In *Reclaiming the Author*, Lucille Kerr offers a detailed examination of the critical concept of “the author” in the recent fiction of Spanish America. By focusing on works by Cortázar, Donoso, Fuentes, Poniatowska, Puig, and Vargas Llosa, she shows how the Spanish Americans have formed a radical poetics of the author. Demonstrating how exemplary Spanish American texts call into question the author as a unitary or uniform, and therefore unproblematic figure, Kerr’s readings reclaim “the author” as a complex critical concept encompassing diverse, conflicting, even competitive roles.

“Lucille Kerr performs a remarkably intelligent rereading of major modern Latin American texts. Her rich, multilayered study invites the reader to revise accepted notions of authority and dependence, of center and margins, of seduction and submission, of presence and fragmentation, opening a space for new and exciting critical discussion.”

—Sylvia Molloy, Albert Schweitzer Professor of Humanities,
New York University

“This book offers a fresh view of certain Spanish American novels . . . presenting them as texts in which the question of the author/authority is an essential part of their narrative structure. In doing so, it offers a new angle for the critical reading of these works and reveals a rich field for intellectual debate.”

—Jose Miguel Oviedo, University of Pennsylvania

“Lucille Kerr has undertaken to show us how Spanish American novelists have ‘done’ theory—in particular, the theory of the Author—by ‘doing’ literary fiction. . . . [She] wears her mastery of theory lightly, but it is clear that she knows whereof she speaks, not only when it comes to theories of the Author and authority, but also over a whole range of other relevant theoretical topics, including verisimilitude and truth, narrative structure and its relation to authority, and the problem of style.”

—Brian McHale, coeditor *Poetics Today*

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