

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

# The Different Shapes of Love

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Communication  
in  
Expressive Arts

at Massey University, Albany, New Zealand

By Tiffany Wheelock

2016

## Abstract

The work is an extract or part of a creative non-fiction book in the autobiographical genre. The book is based on the author's romantic relationships throughout her life to this point. The book follows a developmental journey as the author discovers who she is, what qualities are most important to her and what type of person she wants to end up with. The book describes different stages of relationships and the emotions one experiences, such as being very in love or very heartbroken, and touches on the author's experience in dealing with these emotions.

## Preface

I chose to write a predominantly creative thesis because I am passionate about the autobiographical, self-development genre and find the exploration of different romantic relationships through writing fascinating. I have written about my past and present romantic experiences and discovered how therapeutic writing about one's experiences can be for the author. This made me curious about exploring the topic. Love is something most people can relate to. I wanted to write a creative piece of work where I could draw from my own truth and share with readers what I have learnt in my past (and present) relationships. I wanted my writing to be fascinating and relatable to readers and to take them on journey.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisor Mary Paul for her valuable guidance throughout the course of my MC thesis and my family and friends for providing readership feedback.

## Dedication

I would like to dedicate my work to the three wonderful people who have had an impact on my life and made writing this book possible.

## **CONTENTS PAGE**

### **Critical part: Critical exegesis (20%) ... 1**

- Women's autobiography: How my writing is typical of women's autobiography ... 2
- Therapeutic Writing: Writing as therapy ... 12
- Self-development and autobiography: Some contemporary examples that influenced me ... 23

### **Creative part: The Different Shapes of Love (80%) ... 34**

- Jake ... 36
- Ben ... 65
- Vince ... 106

## *Critical Exegesis*

There are three sections to the critical component of my predominantly creative thesis.

The first part involves looking at conventions of female autobiographical writing, how it often, (through different time periods), includes elements from the romance genre, and how my writing fits into this paradigm.

The second part explores an array of different academic sources on how writing about one's own experiences can be therapeutic for the author.

Lastly, the third and final part of the critical component highlights writing styles, techniques and approaches used in some recent successful non-fiction books that include examples of autobiographical writing on the topic of romantic relationships, as well as aspects of life journeys, bildungsroman or self-development. The section explains how I adopted aspects of these approaches alongside my own writing style to write my book.