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Circling and Shaping the Maelstrom

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements

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Abstract

This thesis is comprised of two sections. The first section is a critical essay entitled *Lawrencian Streams in Joyce Carol Oates' Fiction*. The second section is creative, consisting of a novella entitled *Cold River*. In both sections the flow of water is a metaphor for the protagonists' psychological journey and also a structuring device. The critical essay establishes D.H. Lawrence's general influence on Joyce Carol Oates, drawing on their various works of fiction and non-fiction to explore how and why Oates interrogates, appropriates and re-visions Lawrence. A comparative study of Oates' *Blackwater* and Lawrence's *The Virgin and the Gypsy*, identifies how Eros, symbolised by archetypal water imagery, functions as a force which drives the writing and shapes the form of both novellas. A water trope also features in the creative section, where intertextual allusions, a transformational theme and naturalistic imagery provide evidence that Lawrence and Oates' texts have functioned as mimetic models.

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