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TITLE: A Phenomenological Exploration of 'Borders' in the Fiction of Rachel Seiffert.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this talk is to analyse the function of 'borders', walls and the experience of enclosure in the fiction of contemporary British writer Rachel Seiffert. Drawing on insights from phenomenological enquiries of place, space, home and dwelling and Zygmunt Bauman's reflections on the paradoxes of community, I argue that through this recurring narrative motif, Seiffert highlights the unnatural separation between creaturely existence on earth and communities divided by distinct identities and ethnicities, whether physical or experiential. By this means, the narrative discloses the dangers of ignoring humanity's disconnection from the natural environment and the place-world. More broadly, a discussion of fictional borders through a phenomenological enquiry of space might shed light on the complexities of home-coming in the 'home-coming' sub-genre of war literature, which portrays a shattered domestic harmony in the aftermath of war. Thus, this brief foray into a phenomenology of fictional borderland space contributes to an interesting line of enquiry into the spatial poetics of the literature of 'home-coming'.