



# **Disenchanted Modernity in Robert Kroetsch's *The Studhorse Man*: Biology and Culture; Sex and Gender; Eugenics and Contraception; Writing and Reading**

*Francis Zichy*

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## **Disenchanted Modernity in Robert Kroetsch's *The Studhorse Man*: Biology and Culture; Sex and Gender; Eugenics and Contraception; Writing and Reading** Francis Zichy

This book undertakes a detailed reading of Robert Kroetsch's *The Studhorse Man*, examining this Canadian novel in its transnational historical and socio-cultural context. Key subject headings are biology and culture, sex and gender, eugenics and contraception, writing and reading. The overarching theme is «disenchanted modernity» in the twentieth-century, the systematic displacement of the divine and natural order by a humanly ordained social regime, and by forms of social engineering that brought to bear the full force of modern science, invasively to alter the most fundamental conditions of human life. The more immediate literary frames of reference are Greek mythology, early Christian debates on the body and marriage, and the lore of the North American Aboriginal trickster, as these are deployed and alluded to in Kroetsch's novel. In establishing the sources and contexts of *The Studhorse Man*, this study examines Robert Kroetsch's early drafts of the novel, and his many notes taken and clippings assembled during its composition. An effort has been made to appeal to a wide range of general and academic readers alike by avoiding specialized jargon and adopting a cross-disciplinary approach. This book will be of interest to scholars of literature and literary theory, and of use in courses on literature and the novel, on masculinity and gender studies, and on cultural history in the twentieth century.

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