

MESH(ENS)

050

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**Chay Yew's "Whitelands Trilogy": The Queer Hyphen in
Asian(-)American Identity**



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Table of Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| Declaration..... | (ii) |
| Acknowledgments | (iv) |
| Abstract | (v) |
| Introduction | (1) |
| Chapter One: Broken Porcelain..... | (16) |
| Chapter Two: Queer Language..... | (29) |
| Chapter Three: Beyond Wonderland..... | (47) |
| Conclusion..... | (61) |
| Works Cited..... | (65) |



Abstract of the Thesis

This study investigates the “queer hyphen” in Asian(-)American identities. By applying David Eng’s queerness as a methodology of evaluating Asian American racial formation, this thesis offers a broader view of understanding Asian American identities. In adopting Eng’s queer model, we are going to view “queer” from several perspectives. First, we understand that “queer” as a diasporic predicament is engendered from transnational in-between-ness. Secondly, “queer” is viewed as a political position or stand from which Asian-American activism is experienced. Thirdly, “queer” is understood as a critical artistic method in which normal discourse and performance are deconstructed.

By deploying the methodology of queerness from three different approaches, we will investigate Chay Yew’s “Whitelands Trilogy” (*Porcelain, A Language of Their Own*, and *Wonderland*) and examine the queer hyphen in relation to these three semi-autobiographic plays and re-write them in queer terms. The chapters are titled “Broken Porcelain,” “Queer Language” and “Beyond Wonderland.” In Chay Yew’s work, queering is deployed as a constant process of understanding Asian(-)American identities and meanwhile a dialogue is bridged between the (normative) audience and the (deviant) Whiteland characters via the artistic space of theatre, namely, Chay Yew’s future trajectory and queer home.