

## BOOK DETAILS

### TITLE:

The Law of Douglas van Yssen

### AUTHOR:

Paul Nel

### PUBLISHER:

Scamp fiction

### GENRE:

South African Fiction

### FORMAT:

Soft cover

### ISBN:

978-0-9802609-8-4

### SIZE:

234 x 154mm

### PAGES:

648

### RRP:

R228.00 (incl. VAT)

### DISTRIBUTION:

all good bookstores and

[www.readersforumbooks.co.za](http://www.readersforumbooks.co.za)

### TRADE ENQUIRIES:

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# The Law of Douglas van Yssen

# PAUL NEL

scamp FICTION

## ... a story that speaks to the present and to the future ...

ROSS LECKIE – The Times, London

An innocent train journey to the graduation ceremony of their brilliant son, Douglas, forever changes the lives of a middle aged couple when they hesitatingly engage in an intimate experiment. Douglas is about to become engaged to Frances, a talented girl of fine social standing. When Douglas becomes incurably deaf he has a scandalous affair with a shop assistant and produces a child. His fiancé's father, a prominent judge, disparages Douglas. Isolated on a small farm and utterly impecunious, Douglas' great intellect allows him to set a legal precedent against all odds.

### ADVANCE REVIEWS

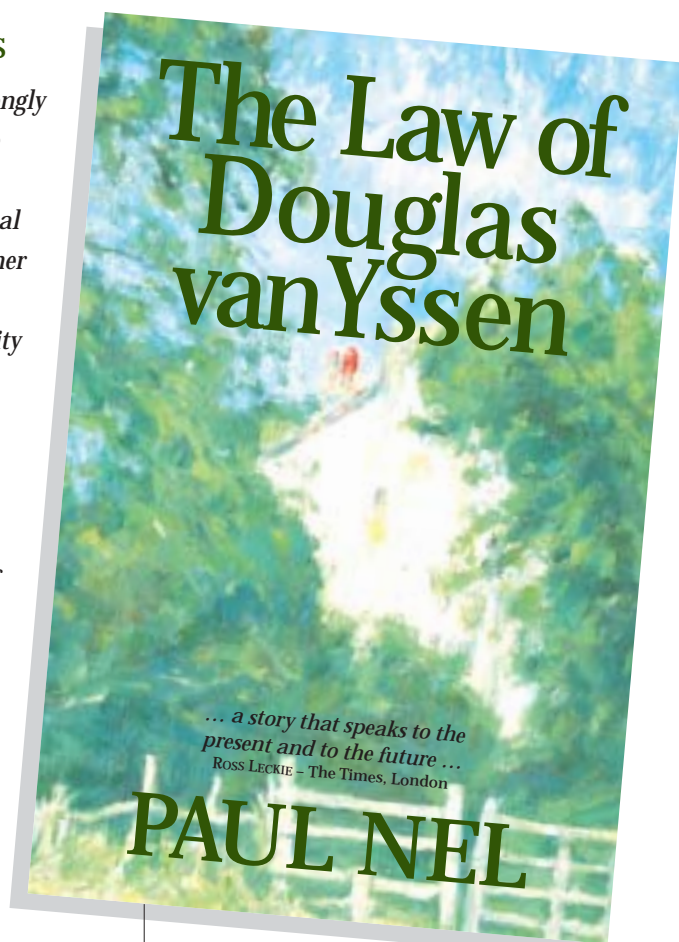
The Law of Douglas van Yssen *stands strongly in the tradition of the bildungsroman, the novel of formation, in which the author presents the psychological, moral and social development of an individual and his or her world. In Nel's hands, Douglas van Yssen becomes an archetype for us all. Nel's ability to create empathy is extraordinary.*

*For its range and depth, this novel deserves comparison with Patrick White's great novel of Australian becoming, The Tree of Man. We see Douglas van Yssen, his country and his culture come of age. There is sadness and pain, yes. But as Douglas overcomes and transcends these, so could we all. Nel's accomplished novel explores some of the best – and the worst – aspects of what it is to be human. It is rich in understanding both of what we are, and might yet become.*

**ROSS LECKIE – The Times, London**

*Paul Nel's debut novel The Law of Douglas van Yssen is an authentic recreation of a bygone period and distinctive mood of rural South Africa in the early 20th century. Set in the Little Karoo town of Oudtshoorn, Nel presents an ingenious and imaginative plot in a narrative form that is rounded, well written and accessible: his prose is intimate, precise, alive, and penetratingly insightful creating an unvarnished portrait of some extraordinary individuals who come to life with lasting vividness, in a story made all the more compelling because much of it is true.*

**READERS' FORUM BOOK CLUB**



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Nel was born in Oudtshoorn in 1939. He lived for many years in Cape Town, where in the early part of his career he worked in management of newspapers. In 1985 he moved to Johannesburg to head an Employee Benefit company. In 1999 he began an active retirement in Knysna, where he cycles, kayaks, plays golf, reads, and writes. Paul is married, with three children. He is now working on two more novels.