

**“Een nieuwe taal voor een urgent verhaal”:
Over de samenspraak van tekst en context bij
Robert Vuijsje *Alleen maar nette mensen***

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**“A New Language for an Urgent Story”: On the Dialogue
Between the Text and Context by Robert Vuijsje’s
Alleen maar nette mensen [*Only Decent Folk*]**

Abstract. In 2009 the novel *Alleen maar nette mensen* [Only Decent Folk] by Robert Vuijsje caused a stir in the Netherlands. It was in particular the way in which black women were represented that gave rise to a heated discussion of the role of literary texts and the responsibility and accountability of the author. This contribution maps the events and discussions around Vuijsje’s novel and will argue that the written text cannot be regarded in a vacuum. The paratext, which includes the positioning and performance of the author in the media, influences the way the novel is read and regarded. The concept autobiografiction, as suggested by Max Saunders, is used as an analytical tool to shed light on the complex relationship between fiction and autobiography. This paper will argue that literary text is part of a ‘package’ a system of (self)representation that involves both fictional and autobiographical moments or gestures. Essentialist genre differences prove untenable in a contemporary setting, which is characterized by the interaction between the written text and the (media) context.

Keywords: Robert Vuijsje; Max Saunders; autobiografiction; literature and media; representation and performance