This thesis constitutes an inquiry into the influence of blindness on the composition of literary narratives. In reading selected writings by the three blind and visually impaired authors J. L. Borges, J. M. Hull, and Stephen Kuusisto, I ask two questions: how does the visually impaired writer’s particular bodily condition bear on narrative choices? Is it possible to extrapolate from this on authorial subjectivity? I write about variable corporeality in short stories by Borges; two diaries titled *Touching the Rock: An Experience of Blindness* (1990) and *On Sight and Insight: A Journey into the World of Blindness* (1997) by Hull; and *Planet of the Blind: A Memoir* (1998) and *Eavesdropping: A Life by Ear* (2006) by Kuusisto. Drawing on the philosophy of time and intuition developed by Henri-Louis Bergson, concepts concerning experience and consciousness elaborated by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and the narratological notion of experientiality posited by Monika E. Fludernik, I substantiate the claim that blindness and visual impairment were, for these writers, a major factor in making narrative choices. Examining these narrative choices will enable us to talk about authorial subjectivity. A detailed discussion combining literary reasoning and philosophical exposition allows the researcher not only to demonstrate, in seven chapters, the validity of his claim, but also to show the unique, divergent ways in which the authors’ artistic subjectivities get articulated. Borges’s ‘fictions’ show a strong awareness of blindness, and a dialectical movement between the ideal and the experiential. This is emblematic of his shifting attitudes towards his disability over a long period of time. Hull’s diaries record a transition in his self-conception from one oriented towards sight to that which is comfortable in the blind condition. Kuusisto makes a comparable but long journey from rejecting blindness to embracing his blind self, and beyond to developing a rich
aesthetic of listening. This study, thus, reveals the profound influence that the experiential dilemma of blindness and selfhood exercises on the literary works of these authors.