



The Literary Function of Robicheauxs Traumatic Vietnam Experience in Neon Rain and Tin Roof Blowdown and Its Contrast to the Authors Biography

Urs Endhardt

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Seminar paper from the year 2009 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Literature, grade: 1,3, University of Flensburg (Englisches Institut), course: American Crime Fiction, language: English, abstract: In this term paper I'm going to deal with the traumatic experiences of the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) homicide detective Dave Robicheaux in the Vietnam War in 1965 and their literary function by examining the essential parts of the two books "Neon Rain" and "The Tin Roof Blowdown". Furthermore I will try to find out how the description of Dave's experiences and his character correlate with the biography and the character of the author. For the extensive understanding of James Lee Burke I will work out a brief excursus which deals with the special features that are immanent in the southern writer due to the history of the region and the mentality of its inhabitants. I hope that my essay will shed more light on the reasons why Burke uses the image of the Vietnam War so many times in his novels and give clues about his opinion about the engagement of the USA in Southeast Asia. The current state of source material is quite good as Burke is a well-known author and has led many interviews. He also runs a very informative website with lots of links to interviews which I used extensively. My main sources were of course his two books, an instructive biography written by Barbara Bogue and an interesting book about the unique features of the American south.

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