

Odd and Deviant Behaviour in Selected Short Stories by Edgar Allan Poe and Flannery O'Connor

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Thesis (M.A.) from the year 2008 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: good, University of Silesia (The Institute of British and American Culture and Literature), 51 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: The aim of the present thesis is to analyse the dark sides of human nature in the literary works by the two prominent American writers, Edgar Allan Poe and Flannery O'Connor. The thesis presents the types of characters whose behaviour is stigmatized with madness, brutality and alienation. The introduction portrays Poe's and O'Connor's profiles in comparison with their contemporary writers. The differences between Edgar Allan Poe and other representatives of Romanticism are discussed. Comparably, the reader is acquainted with these features of Flannery O'Connor's innovative writing that enriched the literary tradition of American South. The introduction presents the major themes of E. A. Poe's and F. O'Connor's fiction, such as inner conflict, death wish, violence and mental deformities. The first chapter describes the impact of the writers' life experiences and personal interests on their literary output. The chapter mentions the traumatic experiences from the authors' lives, such as Poe's early orphanhood and O'Connor's combat with her incurable disease. The chapter is also devoted to the writers' fascination with a sphere of human psyche and their interest in psychopathology. The aim of the second chapter is to depict the heroes whose depravation is so extreme that they lose the ability to decide about themselves and are subjected to the influence of a mysterious force to regain their internal balance. The force is meant to free these figures from their anguish and internal chaos. The third chapter presents the picture of intellectual in Poe's and O'Connor's short stories. This figure aims at exceeding the limits of human mind. As a result, he suppresses his spirit. The chapter portrays contrasting views of both



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