

Eros and Postmodern Nihilism in Don DeLillo's Zero K (2016): A Psychoanalytical Reading

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Abstract : It is broadly accepted that the existence of postmodern individuals is distinguished by a predominant presence of skepticism, anxiety and loneliness. This social unrest is the consequence of a drastic shift in how reality and meaning are conceived, which has been replaced by something that is referred to in media theory and criticism as hyperreality. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the hyperreality that exists in the postmodern nihilistic American community that Don DeLillo depicts in Zero K (2016) through the use of Jean Baudrillard's notions of Simulacra and Simulations. It is a troubled technological late capitalist society obsessed with immortality and fear of demise, and ergo it is an appropriate reading to implement Sigmund Freud's theory of life drive (Eros), which refers to the life instinct fundamental to all humans and the urge to support productivity and construction. The results obtained from a qualitative analysis of Zero K indicate the presence of a clash between the character's life drive and fear of mortality. In an effort to escape loneliness and death, the character Ross Lockhart undergoes, after a moment of hesitation, cryonic freezing in the convergence to preserve his life as well as that of his wife Artis, yet his son Jeffery is firmly convinced of the uselessness of combating the inevitable death.

Keywords : Don DeLillo, Eros, postmodernism Nihilism, Zero K

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