

The Juxtaposition of Home in Toni Morrison's Home: Ironical Functions as Trauma and Healing

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Abstract : The concept of home is usually closely related to the place of safety and security. For people who have travelled far and long, they long to be united with home to feel safe, secure and comfortable. However, for some people, especially for veterans, home cannot offer them those feelings, on the contrary, it can give them the sense of insecurity as well as guilty. Thus, its juxtaposed concept can also put home as an uncanny place that represses and haunt its occupant. As for veterans, 'survivor guilt' overpowers them in the way that it will be hard for them to embrace the comfort that home offers. In Home, Toni Morrison poignantly depicts Frank's life upon returning from the war. Burdened with his traumatic experiences, Frank finds home full with terror, guilt, fear, grief, and loss. Using Dominick laCapra's 'Trauma Theory,' the study finds that Frank works through his trauma by being able to distinguish between past and present so that he can overcome those repressed feelings. Aside from his inner healing power, Frank digests the process of working through with the help of home and community, as proposed by Evelyn Jaffe Schreiber claiming that community can help survivors to heal from traumatic experiences. Thus, Home has two juxtaposed functions; both as traumatizing and healing place.

Keywords : trauma, healing, home, trauma theory

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