

ABSTRACT

CHARACTER AS TRANSCENDENTAL SIGNIFIED: CREATING/COLLAPSING MEANING IN WILLIAM FAULKNER'S *THE SOUND AND THE FURY*

This study examines not only meaning in William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, but also offers an epistemological and rhetorical approach to reading the novel that questions interpretations that offer transcendent meaning within this particular novel or any text. Because we come to knowledge through language, and language is an arbitrary and unstable medium, meaning is forever fluid and can never be fixed. Given such epistemological assumptions and in drawing upon the theories of Friedrich Nietzsche and postmodern theorist Jacques Derrida, meaning in the novel then becomes plural and ultimately undefinable. Such an analysis questions not only the way in which we read literary texts but also the ways in which we read the world.

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