



The Key Concept of the Frontier Transformed - From "Walden" to "Jurassic Park"

Andreas Schwarz

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Seminar paper from the year 2011 in the subject American Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 2,0, Free University of Berlin (John-F.-Kennedy-Institut), language: English, abstract: This paper will try to work and point out parallels and differences between a classical piece of American literature, Henry David Thoreau's Walden, and contemporary Hollywood blockbuster cinema, represented by Steven Spielberg's Jurassic Park. Point of departure and main focus of this paper will be the concept and aspects of the frontier and its reoccurrence as a mythological tool throughout American cultural history. After establishing the historical concept of the frontier, I will therefore go ahead and dig for traces of how this is woven into both works, which in conclusion will hopefully show the assumed American cultural connection between the later acclaimed book written some 150 years ago looking deep into the romantic soul of its protagonist and a consumerist movie from the early nineties that was able to use the benefits of a huge marketing machine to attract its viewership and became a worldwide box office hit. The usefulness of such an undertaking may be questionable for followers of classical cultural American studies but I would like to go with Paul Lauter here and filter out the trivial in mass culture to get to the subject's core of meaning. Essays from his book From Walden Pond to Jurassic Park inspired to look for similarities in those two pieces and maybe find a development of what the concept of the frontier has been transformed into through societal and cultural changes within the last century.



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