



Life is a journey - an interpretation of Eudora Welty's "A Worn Path"

Franziska Höfer

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Seminar paper from the year 2002 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 2,3 (B), <http://www.uni-jena.de/> (Institut für Anglistics/American Studies), 6 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: "A Worn Path" written by Eudora Welty was first published within her volume of short stories "A Curtain of Green" in 1941.¹ It is a story about life in its purest naturalism.

Welty's main character is the old Negro woman Phoenix Jackson. With her tremendous self-sacrifice and the love for her little grandson she frequently goes on an adventurous journey from the old Natchez Trace into town to get some medicine for her grandchild who swallowed lye some years ago and is frequently suffering from sore throat.

But more than one could think of the story is a metaphor for the way of life that everyone of us has to go. The story's path expresses the hard journey of life – the journey, even Eudora Welty speaks about when being asked about the unsolved fate of the grandson: "But it is the journey, the going of the errand, that is the story, and the question is not whether the grandchild is in reality alive or dead."² This can be easily compared to the path of life and to the fact that it's result is less important than the path itself.

1 Kreyling, Michael. Understanding Eudora Welty. Columbia: University of Southern Carolina Press, 1999. 6.

2 Welty, Eudora. "Is Phoenix Jackson's Grandson Really Dead?" The Story and Its Writer – An Introduction to Short Fiction. Ed. Ann Charters. Shorter 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1990. 750.

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