



Melancholia and Maturation: The Use of Trauma in American Children s Literature (Hardback)

By Eric Tribunella

University of Tennessee Press, United States, 2010. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. Coming of age in children s fiction often means achieving maturity through the experience of trauma. In classics ranging from Old Yeller to The Outsiders, a narrative of psychological pain defies expectations of childhood as a time of innocence and play. In this provocative new book, Eric L. Tribunella explores why trauma, especially the loss of a loved object, occurs in some of the most popular and critically acclaimed twentieth-century American fiction for children. Tribunella draws on queer theory and feminist revisions of Freud s notion of melancholia, which is described as a fundamental response to loss, arguing that the low-grade symptoms of melancholia are in fact what characterize the mature, sober, and responsible American adult. Melancholia and Maturation looks at how this effect is achieved in a society that purports to protect youngsters from every possible source of danger, thus requiring melancholia to be induced artificially. Each of the book s five chapters focuses on a different kind of lost object sacrificed so as to propel the child toward a distinctively gendered, sexual, ethical, and national adulthood- from same-sex friends to the companionship of boy-and-his-dog...



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