



# The Function of Love in Baldwin's 'Another Country'

*Sarah Poppel*

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Seminar paper from the year 2004 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 2,0, University of Tübingen, language: English, abstract: The novel *Another Country*, published in 1962, was written by James Baldwin, an African-American writer, particularly well known for his social-critical essays. *Another Country*, as a fictional work, serves Baldwin to express several ideas formerly developed in his essay writing and so the novel covers a manifold spectrum of social issues, including race, sexuality and finally love. Love as a central topic in Baldwin's *Another Country* has been analysed by several critics and even Baldwin admits candidly that the novel shows "the desperate searches" of its characters "for the self-knowledge and self-esteem – the identity – without which real love is impossible." But how do these themes work in the novel, what does such a love have to look like and what does it have to include for the individual to be "able to learn to see real human beings behind the categories, labels, and prejudices" which are imposed by the loveless in a society. This essay undertakes an approximation to these questions mainly on the basis of the novel, considering some of Baldwin's essays and works of critics such as Lorelei Cederstorm or David Leeming.

The first part will focus on an analysis of the relationship with which the novel starts and which can be regarded as a crucial guideline, a "negative touchstone" for the further development and interpretation of the novel. In Part II a short overview of the other relationships of the novel is provided. By doing this, their connection with the first relationship will be illustrated, until finally it will be possible to suggest how the characters succeed or fail in the matter of love, which Baldwin conceives as "[...] a journey two people have to make with each other."

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