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On Brokeback Mountain: Meditations about Masculinity, Fear, and Love in the Story and the Film

Eric Patterson

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On Brokeback Mountain: Meditations About Masculinity, Fear, and Love in the Story and the Film provides a close, detailed, comparative discussion of the short story and the film in relation to ways of understanding masculinity and love between men in American culture. It uses analytical ideas from gay and lesbian/queer studies, American studies, social history, film history, and literary history, but avoids specialized theoretical language in order to be accessible to the many people interested in the story and the film. Original, interdisciplinary, and engaging, On Brokeback Mountain is intended to be not only useful to academic specialists but also accessible and readable for any interested, educated reader. The two versions of Brokeback Mountain are significant for taking readers and audiences inside the perspectives of men who love men, showing what physical and emotional passion, and hostility toward that passion, may be like for them. The story and the film help in understanding the many men who love men and who don't fit stereotypes of gay men or participate in the gay/queer worlds of urban/academic communities, especially men in rural areas and in working class contexts. This book examines the presentation of friendship, sex, and love between men in Brokeback Mountain, as well as the depiction of homophobia and its effects on men who love men and their families. It relates the story and the film to the literary tradition of the homoerotic pastoral, the literary/movie tradition of the Western, and the tradition of the tragic romantic love story.

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