



# The Significance of numbers in "Beloved"

*Nora Nobis*

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Seminar paper from the year 2012 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 1,3, University of Wuppertal, language: English, abstract: Beloved is a novel with many interesting themes which are worth examining.

The following paper deals with the significance of numbers in Toni Morrison's Beloved. Numbers play an important role in this novel. The novel was first published in 1987 and is a neo-slave narrative (cf. Palladino 54) written in free indirect discourse. It is about Sethe, a former slave, and her family. Sethe will not deal with her past and the trauma she has suffered during her time in Kentucky on the plantation "Sweet Home". She is hunted by the ghost of her baby that she has killed because she did not want her to become a slave. The ghost will only disappear after she has dealt with it and with her past.

Numbers play an important role in Beloved. Morrison did not choose them by chance, they all have a meaning in the story of the novel. I want to show the significance they have – by some numbers with reference to the Bible. First, there is an analysis of the overall structure and the numbers of the book, of the three parts and the chapters including the first sentence of all three parts (cf. chapter 2.1). Then the numbers which occur in the novel are examined (cf. chapter 2.2-2.9), after this analysis, there will be an examination of the dedication – which is also a number (cf. chapter 3). The end of the paper is composed of the conclusion in chapter

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