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how can something
so short and modest
affect us so
profoundly

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Of the narratives, I have pursued in my all too-short span of life, "Shame" has as much impact as any great, eternal message to the sum total of mankind.

Any message that is deep-rooted and profound can strike us considerably without having to be written in a long story. The story conveys a message about humanity and morality, the way in which the character has been described and his narrative mentioned, it is enough to make the reader feel touched.

So many questions - here is one of my favorites: why are there TWO narratives here? There are two narratives because they are conveying two different messages which are still inter-related.

What does one have to do with the other?

These two narratives are paradoxes. While one teaches him self-pity, the other incident teaches him his worthfulness. He learns to hate in the first narrative and tries to overcome that in the next one when he wants to help that whino.

Dick Gregory overcame his shortcomings to become a man of significance; Is the world a better place now that we no longer ridicule the less fortunate, or do we supported weakness and thus make people weak?

We still ridicule the less fortunate. However, systems have emerged that are aimed at helping these poor people. This has caused a stable and better condition for the society as a whole.

The narrative is called "Shame". What is another title for it?

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“Worth”

SHAME: AN ANALYSIS

In her book 'To the lighthouse', Virginia Woolf writes 'children never forget'. Reflecting on the message echoed by this novel with regard to the sharp sense of these children, one comes to realize the bitter truth about the importance of childhood in shaping one's attitudes, perceptions, morality. In other words, historical developments and experiences imprint on our minds and display in our personality in one way or another. (Woolf, Oxford University Press, 2006)

Sigmund Freud, a psychoanalyst stressed a lot on the earlier experiences that shaped the later years of a person's life. In the passage 'Shame', this is made obvious with the child's first few experiences with the fellow men who taught him that self-pity is hazardous. An episode in his school at the age of seven taught him how pity can be humiliating and the belief was further strengthened by the wino who he helped when he did not need it. The lines that say "We are collecting this money for you and your kind being on relief." This was when he came on terms with the feeling of hate for someone. His feelings became intense when the girl he had been crushing on 'Helene Tucker turned around. She felt sorry for me'. He was pitied by her. The honesty with which he had been willing to donate the money turned him into a hateful person.

All his life, the milestones that were achieved by him were actually as a result of this extreme hate. He became consciously aware of the sorry-look

of Helene for him. He wanted her to realize that he is not to be pitied. As the author mentions that he continued to achieve everything because of her and she remained in his system until he was married.

The first few years are critical because the child can be molded. Kids are naïve. They are an empty slate with no right or wrong judgments. Whatever is written on the slate, it gets engraved onto it, unable to get off it! In the book called “ Harry Potter and the Sorcerer stone”, the idea that love could surpass all obstacles is related with the fact that Harry has been showered with immense love in his childhood. He has been taught to love. This becomes his weapon. If you are taught love, then you will learn to love. Your moral behavior is contingent upon your history that precedes it. {Rowling, Scholastic, 2000)

The other concept that was reinforced by this passage is ‘ serving humanity’. He was unable to help the whino when he wanted it. Could this learning to help others be reinforced by his disturbed childhood? He came from a poor family. He was the one being helped by being sent on a relief. He never helped. When he actually tried to help, he was pushed back and experienced the peak of humiliation. He was never taught that he must and he was afraid that he might be punished for doing a good deed.

All the good deeds that are done for men are done in the light of benevolence. You do something for those around you because you have the benefactor quality or you must have acquired this on your journey. The

saying of Jesus goes like this ' Do to every man that which if you were he and in his place, you would wish done for you.' (Hamilton, Hamilton, 2000)

Human beings cannot exist alone. They need to exist together with others which is must for their survival. Thus, doing good to those around you will serve as something good but the good must be wanted on time.

References:

1. Hamilton. William; " Studies in moral science". Hamilton. 2000
2. Woolf Virginia. ' To the Lighthouse'. Oxford University Press. 2006
3. Rowling, J. K. " Harry Potter and the sorcerer stone". Scholastic Publishing. 2000