

Free trainspotting essay example

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Introduction

The Trainspotting is a Scottish novel authored by Irvine Welsh. The novel was released in 1993. It features a collection of short stories that are written in Scottish English, Scots or British English. The main theme in the novel is addiction. It revolves around individuals who reside in Leith, Edinburgh. These residents either use heroin, have befriended a core group of people who use heroin, or take part in destructive activities that are similar in function to heroine and are therefore implicitly depicted as addictions. The novel has since revolutionized Scottish fiction especially after the success of its film adaptation, to almost attaining cult status. The author has interplayed football loyalties, neocolonial political status, customs, particular Scottish settings with the Scots dialect to portray transnational ideologies like the working class, globalization, scapegoating, social contract, revenge and the nature of reality.

Picking on two aspects of the novel, this paper will carry out a literal analysis that aims to depict the relevance of the Scots in the contemporary society. Although the novel was set in the 1980s, the author uses several aspects in

the novel to allude to situations that are evident in the modern society thereby asserting the relevance of the Scots in the contemporary society. The author uses white settlers and drugs and drinking to not only depict the lives of the unemployed in the world but also the ambivalent political and moral issues in the contemporary society.

Discussion

The political issues in the contemporary world are aptly alluded to in the novel through the relationship between Scots and the Britons as seen by their hate and disgust for the white settlers.

“ They're just wankers. We are colonized by wankers. We can't even pick a decent, vibrant, healthy culture to be colonized by. No. We're ruled by effete arseholes. What does that make us? The lowest of the fuckin low, the scum of the earth. The most wretched, servile, miserable, pathetic trash that was ever shat intae creation. Ah don't hate the English. They just git oan wi the shite thuv goat. Ah hate the Scots”

The colorful observations made by the character in the novel offer a very rich commentary of the strained relationship between the English people and the Scots. This identifies important themes and issues within the population.

Such issues include the ambivalent racist attitudes as expressed through the references he makes of the English people. Other themes that emerge are those of subservience and inferiorism on the part of the Scots. Scotland was a colonial outpost of the English empire. The highlands in the region were owned by barons who ruled on behalf of the king. The strained relationship between the Scots and the English is still felt to-date with the Scots feeling the encroachment of the English into their lands, even if in the form of

bought property (Morace 56).

White settlers in the novel represent the upper and middle working class.

They are also the object of the hatred from the unemployed Scots.

“ Ah can tell by their accents, dress and bearing that they are middle to upper-middle-class English. The city's full Of Such white-settler types, says she, who's just back from London! You used to get Geordies and Scousers and Brummies and Cockneys at the Uni, now it's a playground for failed Oxbridge home-counties types, with a few Edinburgh merchant school punters representing Scotland. Ah smile at them. Ah must stop having these preconceived notions, and learn to treat people as people, It's Mark's influence, his prejudices are infectious, the crazy prick.”

Drinking and drug addiction is a central theme. This theme has been used extensively in the novel to illustrate what it means to live for the unemployed Scots. In the novel, through characters like Mark Renton, the author has exhaustively shown how they have abandoned every other cause in pursuit of self-indulgence through addiction to drugs like heroine and alcohol. The drugs and drinking have not helped the Scots acquire employment opportunities.

“ Yes. I've had a long-standing problem with heroin addiction. I've been trying to combat this, but it has curtailed my employment activities.”

The drug and alcohol indulgence also incapacitated the Scots so that they could not even work had they been afforded the opportunities.

“ Then when You Put heroin into it, they're no longer their own. Less Matt more heroin.”

In fact, the drugs and drinking expose themes of disillusionment by the

unemployed Scots. As evidenced in the novel, they stole in order to finance their addictions. This is testament to the resignation that characterized the characters in the novel.

“ And you, Mr Murphy, you intended to sell the books, like you sell everything else that you steal, in order to finance your heroin habit?”

You, Mister Murphy, are an habitual thief. Spud shakes his shoodirs as if tae say, its no ma fault. – The reports state that you are still addicted to heroin. You are also addicted to the act of theft, Mr Murphy. People have to work hard to produce the goods you repeatedly steal.

The friends in the group of the protagonist lead a life filled with addiction and the fact that they have n money to finance it does not deter them. They result to stealing money and property which they later sell. Spirited efforts to help rehabilitate them have been futile as they soon slip back to addiction. This is also an evidence of resignation and the lack of the will to fight. This is synonymous with the contemporary world where people live under the yoke of many addictions. Through his theme, the novel offers a vivid picture of heroin addict's everyday routines. Choose life is a phrase that has been used generously in the novel. It is directed to those who live a lesser life due to the inhibitions of addictive substance, be they drugs or other things.

The alcoholism and drug addiction in the novel also unearths sexual promiscuity and immoral behavior. The character sick boy is an amoral con artist. The character has his way with women and picks them up with ease. He is also on the sentry for potential scams. Despite his charming and friendly façade, his general regard for the women he seduces is tempered with contempt. The character becomes even more immoral after his

daughter dies. The daughter asphyxiated while Sick Boy and Lesley her mother was on a binge of heroin. The immorality and sexual promiscuity in the novel provides undertones the nature of the contemporary society.

Conclusion

Although the novel was set in the 1980s, it reveals many aspects of the contemporary society. The push and shove between the social classes experienced in the Scottish world are also evident in the modern day society. These are caused by inequalities in opportunities in the economic models in the society. The decadence in morality is synonymous with the modern society where sex has been commoditized and sexual promiscuity has characterized human relationships. The drug addictions and alcoholism in the novels shows the vices that have permeated our society presently. Their effects are far reaching and the victims like those in the novel have spent time in jail for their addiction. The ambivalent political undertones in the novel underscore the turbulent political times in which we live. The society that is depicted in the movie puts Scotland in the global scene. The readers of the novel have a lot they can identify with from the novel, either directly or indirectly.

Works cited

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