

The open boat by stephen crane. who is the most ethical character

[Literature](#)



Who is the Most Ethical Character " The Open Boat" by Stephen Crane was written in 1897. This story depicts a real experience from Stephen Crane's life. It is possible to say that the most ethical person in the story is a correspondent, who is full of wisdom all the time and tries to be objective in all situations. This is the base of social ethics. When one person's actions begin to affect another person, we have moved from personal ethics to social ethics and often have to place some limits on human behavior. The story morality states that everyone is responsible for his own actions, and it is useless to blame everything on the people around you. The correspondent is depicted as the person who is full of life experience, but still has not found the truth of life.

The important feature is that the readers do not know his name, as he is one of those men in the boat. The main idea is that a man should take a true journey alone, and the men who made these were heroes themselves in the true sense. It is possible to admit that this very moment caused the awakening of many characters in the story. Only in difficult situations people can show their real inner state and their morals.

The tough and lasting thread on which faith is strung has three strands: reason, freedom and tolerance. It stands to reason that fear applied to moral leads to individual degradation. Tolerance protects that diversity and demands respect. The Crane points out that: " the ethics of their condition was decidedly against any open suggestion of hopelessness" (Crane, 1993). The correspondent is a person who fights with his own imperfection trying to apply ethical standards in this very situation. We know that he: " had been taught to be cynical of men, knew even at the time was the best experience

of his life" (1993).

When fear starts to dominate, people usually act in their own interests, they degrade as the keepers of customs and morality. It remains disappointing that the social issues that are generally identified as pertaining to deal with questions of individual choice, rather than of communal responsibility. It seems that for correspondent it is difficult to change his attitude towards life, but the rat-trap has an influence on his outlook. He is the only one who reminds previous years and feels sympathy, in his case for a dying soldier: "The correspondent, plying the oars and dreaming of the slow and slower movements of the lips of the soldier, was moved by a profound and perfectly impersonal comprehension. He was sorry for the soldier of the Legion who lay dying in Algiers." (Cranes, 1993).

In the story Crane rings up questions concerning moral health of people, and in spite of all the negative life lessons the correspondent understands what it is to be an individual. Throughout the story there is a definite blame unmoral behaviour of the people but it is most poignantly and symbolically demonstrated with the rejection of previous life. Crane shows that the inner state of correspondent has changed, and the readers cannot find "a cynical man" as he was before the journey: "Nevertheless, it is true that he did not wish to be alone with the thing. He wished one of his companions to awaken by chance and keep him company with it" (Crane, 1993), but he did not do it sympathizing with tired and frozen comrades.

The facts mentioned above prove the idea that only in difficult situations people show their real nature and ethical vies. The main ethical question solved in the story is that: 'we will not need to feel alone, because we can

always turn to another person" (Crane, 1993). The correspondent has developed an ethical code comprised of compassion and grace under pressure that offers his life meaning

It is possible to conclude that toughness stems not from insensitivity but from a strict ethical code which functions as the characters' sole defense against the overwhelming chaos of nature. His ethics is a set of rules including the ideals of honor, courage and endurance in a world that is sometimes chaotic and always painful. A mature person acts in accordance with his own ethical code developing an approach to life that helps him get through the day.

References

1. Crane, S. *The Open Boat and Other Stories*. Dover Publications. 1993.