

Good essay on power and powerlessness

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



The interesting story written by Oates was set in the sixties about a fifteen year old girl. During this time, little was known about the psychological background of serial killers and how they would prey on their victims. What made “Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?” even creepier than it is was the character Arnold. This is because very little is known about him. The story does not focus on him, his actions or his thoughts. He was a mysterious person that was not very desirable. However, he still caught the curiosity of Connie. This was something that happened quite often during the time, maybe even until now. Adolescent girls are confused and follow serial killers because they fear for the safety of their family. They think that the only way to save those that they love is by obeying the requests of the serial killers. Without much information about these types of people, and with misleading “Stranger Danger” campaigns, people are given the wrong impression about dangerous individuals. Serial killers look just like everyone else and can blend in with their surroundings. Instead of avoiding shady looking people, these girls follow men who do not look all too harmless. Arnold, however, seemed disturbed and obsessive. The fact that he could describe everything about Connie and her family, circle of friends, etc. must have been very shocking for the girl.

"The music was always in the background like music in a church service, it was something to depend upon" (Oates 6). Music described how Connie felt about boys, herself and things around her. She was described to feel a racy kind of emotion when she is happy. This was the only way she could describe her sexual desires with the boys. Arnold was into upbeat kind of music that might say something about how he thinks or what is going on in his mind.

Even though the main character was a girl, and she had an older sister who had it together, women seemed to be powerless in the novel. This was seen in cars and those who were able to drive. No woman was seen behind the wheel in this story. All the men were allowed to drive, young boys, fathers, brothers and even serial killers took their turn behind the wheel. The only time that a woman was mentioned to be driving was when they were criticizing her for her skills. " crazy woman driver" (Oates 36). The story written by Oates is not about the serial killer or dangerous individuals, it is more about the adolescent victims that killers prey on. It is about how they act, what they think and how they see themselves.

Works Cited

Oates, J. C. & Showalter, E. (1994). " Introduction". Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been. Rutgers University Press. p. 9. ISBN 0-8135-2135-1.