

Reader response

Literature



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20June, TOPIC SHAKESPEARE’S SISTER (345 words) In modern history, women have come to enjoy similar positions of position and power as those enjoyed by their fellow men. This is however after a long struggle for equality through the years. During Shakespeare’s era as per the text, women and men lived in different worlds in terms of the opportunities accorded to them. Woolf talks of women being forced into an early marriage by their families and being abused if they opposed it. “ .. she was to be betrothed to the son of a neighboring wool-stapler. She cried out that marriage was hateful to her, and for that she was severely beaten by her father” (Woolf 3). Women faced further obstacles in pursuing career dreams and passions. Judith like her brother Shakespeare had a passion for theatre, but was laughed at as she stood at the stage door. The only ‘ profession’ a woman could excel at was prostitution as Woolf narrates: “ He hinted - you can imagine what. She could get no training in her craft. Could she even seek her dinner in a tavern or roam the streets at midnight?” (Woolf 3). Women also suffered social stigma with their works being often misconstrued and wrongly perceived: “ Had she survived, whatever she had written would have been twisted and deformed” (Woolf 5).

All these beliefs have been proved wrong with women coming out strongly in all aspects of life. Women were courageous enough to take a stand in the chauvinistic and discriminative era of Shakespeare to pave way for the opportunities the modern day woman enjoys. Men and women can now hold and enjoy the same positions of career, leadership and power with women even outshining the men in some instances. However no matter how much equality is sought after, it’s difficult to achieve to completely achieve it. This is owed to numerous factors such as religion; most religions decree the man

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to be superior and ask the woman to be submissive to him. Other biological factors such as those of being a mother have unfortunately also interfered with the progression of women as in most cases juggling with family forces their personal and career interests to take a back seat. The truth is however that more doors have opened for women who now have the freedom of choice, expressing opinions, education and financial independence. Women are rising to the top and excelling in fields long thought to be only for men; proving to the world at large that women are as good if not better than men in almost all areas of life.

TOPIC 2: TALENTED TENTH (603 words)

Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois and Marcus Harvey were all great African American visionaries in the early 20th century who tried to offer solutions on problems regarding black people not being treated as equally as the white people. Washington emphasized on black people investing in education and establishing their own enterprises so as to prove their worthiness to the American economy. He accepted the fate of discrimination against black people and instead chose to focus on fighting for economic rights. This resulted to undermining of black people, pride in their own race and economic progress. His efforts were thus though well-intended were at times counteractive as it was difficult for black people to be academically and economically empowered while at the same occasion they are mired from attending good schools and holding well-paying jobs similar to those of their white counterparts.

Harvey believed that whites would never stop discriminating against black people and therefore advocated for black people developing themselves separately from their whites. He fought for international black-revolution and <https://assignbuster.com/reader-response-response-essay-samples/>

encouraged them to build their own industries and businesses to support themselves. His visionary was not sustainable, however due to lack of funds. The black people were not economically empowered at the time and could not be economically autonomous. A better initiative would have been to solicit for collaboration between the whites and the blacks, or maybe fight for blacks to be allowed to hold well-paying jobs and get quality school opportunities.

W. E. B. Du Bois's school of thought was that of a talented tenth where the cream of the black population that was more educated and learned would pull the rest up by passing on knowledge, morals, values and ideals which would eventually make the black race more elite.

This idea was an intelligent idea as even from the Bible; where the black race found most of its footing; specific individuals of outstanding character were handpicked by God to offer guidance to masses through different difficult situations. Not all men can lead and not all men have access to the same opportunities: " All men cannot go to college but some men must; every isolated group or nation must have its yeast" (Du Bois 2). The ones who are fortunate enough to get these opportunities must grasp them and use them well by extending the knowledge and experiences they gain to open doors to the others who are less fortunate. This will slowly uplift masses culturally, socially and economically.

Someone must be courageous enough to stand up and lead so as to be a pioneer of change. Throughout the history of the black people, this idea of the talented tenth by Du Bois has been replicated by many great men and women such as Martin Luther, Malcolm X and others who helped create a path for others to follow. The thought of the talented tenth is germane even

today, where a few special individuals rise up to be exceptional and try to inspire others to be great achievers despite their race.

An increasing number of blacks have risen to the pinnacle of the food chain and is slowly helping others climb up. Today, there is at least an African-American in all professional fields including business, science, medicine, engineering, aviation, leadership, entrepreneurship among others. A good recent example is Barack Obama, who by becoming the foremost black leader of the United States of America has shown the world and more so the black people that they are just as intelligent, able and important as people from any other race. He has massively eroded the inferiority complex of the black people; and the precedent he has set will surely be a source of reference for more profound achievements by the black race in future.

Works cited

Du bois, W. E. B. “ The Talented Tenth”.

Woolf, Virginia. “ A Room of One’s own”