

# Postmodernism

Literature



Postmodernism Sherman Alexie has extensively explored postmodernism in his narrative 'Do not gentle'. It is relatively hard to define the word postmodernism when used independently. The definition can differ from culture to culture, society to society, or even race to race. In view of Sherman, postmodernism is change brought about by the influence of television and pop culture, and computer and other technologies. This paper analyzes the elements of fiction used in 'Do not go gentle' by Sherman Alexie that portray her as a postmodern writer (Schaffer 123). Setting The setting the narrator chooses is a perfect match to postmodernism. The narrator's baby stuck his face between the mattress and crib therefore suffocating him. The suffocation was so severe that the baby's lungs were tight and the baby's face almost turned blue. As any parent would, the narrator and his wife rushed their little blue baby to the hospital. While in the hospital, the narrator's baby was attached to a million dollar's worth machines and equipments that helped the baby to breathe, feed and even pass out body waste. The narrator cannot possibly figure out if the whole of his extended family can raise the money equivalent to the value of the equipments in the hospital. Through these multimillion machines and equipment, the reader gets the true feel of postmodernism. This is unlike in the past when there was little advancement in medical technology, when all a patient could get is a few injections to help him or her alleviate the ailment. Times are changing fast and technology is shaping up the new face of medicine and how ailments are easily countered by postmodern machines like the ones in the children hospital where the narrator's baby was admitted (Alexis 1678). Finance is another contributing factor to postmodernism but the narrator deliberately chooses to use it nobly. After taking turns sleeping <https://assignbuster.com/postmodernism/>

and watching over their baby, the narrator decides to take a drive and perhaps buy some child toys for his ailing baby son. When the narrator reaches the toy store, he is amazed to find out that the toys on sale were not actually the toys he had initially thought of. Nevertheless, he walks all around the store, allowing his eyes to scrutinize all the vibrators and dildos that he saw. This brings the reader to another aspect of postmodernism. (Alexis 1679). In the past, there was no such thing as vibrators and dildos. Women were fully satisfied sexually by their male partners. In today's postmodern world, where women do not even want to get married or have any sexual affair with a man, vibrators have been designed to help this kind of women achieve and satisfy their sexual desires (Loeb 75). Irony The reader gets a wide variety of irony from how the narrator chooses his words. One such instance is when the narrator compares the life support machines that are worth millions of dollars in his opinion, to the value of the total worth of his extended family. His extended family includes his uncles, aunts and grandparents. The narrator curiously sums up all the money he could collect from his extended family to 512 dollars. Curiosity of a reader questions why the narrator, whose family is worth a mere \$512, would decide to take his ailing son to a hospital equipped with multimillion machines. Anyone would expect him to pay a lot more money than \$512 as hospital bill for his son. The narrator apparently drives to the toy store. No one would expect a person with a low worth to be driving. The narrator's main aim of using irony is to contrast the sharp differences between social classes and its effect in the society (Sim 234). Symbolism Though not a prominent writing style used in the story, the narrator brings it up in one or two occasions. Mr. Grief. Many would think that Mr. Grief is a physical

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person. The narrator chooses to use Mr. Grief to symbolize the unfortunate luck or misfortune that befalls his little baby. Thought the beginning of the story, the narrator often mentions about the powers of Mr. Grief. (Alexis 1678) Conclusion Postmodernism has taken a substantial course in today's world as witnessed by the modern equipments that are used to treat the narrator's son. It has also affected the way women view sexuality the value of men in relationships. The toys that are sold in the toyshop are enough proof (Schaffer 78). References Loeb, Paul Rogat. "The Impossible Will Take a Little While." New York: Basic Books, 2004 Alexie, Sherman. "Ten Little Indians. Do not go gentle." New York: Grove Press. 2004 <http://www.cla.purdue.edu/english/theory/postmodernism/modules/introduction.html>. Schaffer, Jaime Lynn. "Breaking Down the Reservation Fence: A Postmodern Native American Cultural Discourse Featuring Philip J. Deloria and Sherman Alexie." Villanova: Proquest, 2008 Sim, Stuart. "The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism." New York: Routledge, 2004 Baym, Nina et al. "The Norton Anthology of American Literature" (Shorter Seventh Edition) (Vol. 2). New York: W. W. Norton & Company; 7th edition, 2007