

Transcendentalism in dead poets society assignment

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In the movie *Dead Poets Society*, the literary philosophy of Transcendentalism is portrayed through the teachings of Mr. Keating, a transcendentalist, at Walton, a private school grounded on conformity and Institution. The movie does not look at the school as a whole, but one can recognize the engagement concerning the transcendentalists and conformists In the movie when observing the fluctuations and activities taken by the group of boys who call themselves the Dead Poets Society. The Dead Poets Society is an organization of a select few students who aspire to discover inspiration through appraisal of poetry.

The movie will address the doctrines of transcendentalism as they pertain to three key transcendentalist writers, relating them to the characters in the film and their particular discovered vocations. The vital indication is that the doctrines of transcendentalism from the 19th century persist definitely in the beliefs of American people, as is evident in this movie. Various transcendentalist ideologies frequently relate to each character, principally when in concern with individuality.

Transcendentalism asserts that every individual is capable of discovering higher truth on his or her own through intuition. Transcendentalists believe that self-reliance and Individualism must outweigh external authority and blind conformity to custom and tradition. Qualities of transcendentalism are revealed in the scenes when Mr. Keating tells Nell to talk to his father about being in the play, when Charlie makes up a "phone call from God" and does not give in to Mr. Nolan, and when Knox goes to Chris' school to make her accept his affection for her.

In the scene when Mr. Keating tells Neil to discuss being in the play with his father, Mr. Keating assumes the role of father and comrade to Neil the night before the play. This example is one of the exhibitions of the relationships that Keating has generated with his students. This scene represents Mr. Keating as much more than just a teacher. Mr. Keating intended to help Neil with his struggle against conformity and tradition. Neil's father is a very potent example of someone opposed to transcendentalism, a conformist or institutionally.

Keating listens and asks Neil if he has ever been as sincere with his own father to which Neil responds, "I can't talk to him that way" to which Keating asks, "Have you ever told your father what you just told me? About your passion for acting. You ever show him that?" And Neil says sadly "I can't." Keating's words encourage Neil's individualism, and self-reliance: "Then you're acting for him, too. You're playing the part of the dutiful son. I know this sounds impossible, but you have to talk to him. You have to show him who you are, what your heart is. Neil does not tell his father and lies to Keating. Mr. Keating's advice to Neil emulates the principle of civil disobedience as described in Henry David Thoreau excerpt from Civil Disobedience and Other Essays, "If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it go, let it go: perchance it will wear smooth—certainly the machine will wear out... But if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, say, break the law. Let your life be a counter-friction to stop the machine.

What I have to do is to see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn. " Unfortunately, Neil's father does not give into son, Neil. In contrast, Charlie is a fugue in the movie that does stimulate some progress against the idealism. Furthermore, in the scene when Charlie makes up a phone call from God", Henry David Thoreau principle of civil disobedience is also exemplified. Charlie's uprising is to put out an article under the name of the Dead Poets Society demanding that girls be allowed to attend Walton. This is Charlie's best moment. A general assembly is called and Mr..

Nylon's speech follows " In this week of Welter's Honor there appeared a profane and unauthorized article. Rather than spend my valuable time ferreting out the guilty persons and let me assure you I will find them - - I'm asking any and all students who know anything about this article to make themselves known here and now. Whoever the guilty persons are, this is your only chance to avoid expulsion from this school. " The sound of a phone ringing can be heard. It's a false phone that Charlie has arranged. Charlie picks up a telephone and answers " Walton Academy. Hello. Yes, he is.

Just a moment". Charlie stands up, holding a phone and bell in his hands. " Mr.. Nolan, it's for you. It's God. He says we should have girls at Walton. " This scene pools non-conformity, revolt counter to the institution, self-reliance and, notably, a non-transcendental theme, humor, a retreat liberator of free speech. Charlie's boldness and intrepid outburst in this scene best emulates Henry David Thoreau ideology of civil disobedience as observed in

the excerpt from Civil Disobedience and Other Essays “ Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in government?

Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing and organizing the rights of man? ” The notion that there is a possibility for greater development within the school is what stimulates Charlie’s rebellious nature and outbursts. Mr.. Nolan reprimands Charlie demanding Ames of the members of the Dead Poets Society but Charlie does not capitulate. On that note, when Neil asks, “ So what happened? ” Charlie replies, “ I’m to turn everyone in, apologize to the school and all will be forgiven. ” On Nil’s inquiry, “ So, what are you going to do? Charlie! Charlie’s response in keeping with his defiance is “ Damn it, Neil, The name is Undead. ” signifying that Charlie does not and will not give in. He has a lot of resilience and is a true radical. Similarly, another character that actually takes initiative in the movie to perpetuate the essence of transcendentalism is Knox. Likewise, when Knox goes to Chris’ school to make her accept his affection for her; he implements the instructions of self-reliance by Ralph Wald Emerson. Knox overcomes his “ calmness” and takes initiative by going to Chris’ school with flowers.

He says, “ Please, accept these. Please. ” Chris replies “ No. No- I, I can’t. Forget it” and walks away. Impervious, Knox follows and reads his poem. The classroom becomes noiseless as everybody heeds his brave and powerful message for Chris. Knocks actions are enthused by the Dead Poets Society and Knox reveals the self-confidence e gained from the Dead Poets Society. The Dead Poets Society gave Knox the knowledge of Transcendentalism,

which is expressed in Ralph Wald Emerson, Self- Reliance, “ Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood?

Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood. ” The point articulated in this quotation is that one must not quarrel over the truths of their beliefs, but embrace them. Only once Knox learns to embrace his love for Chris Chris venerates his resolve and moves toward progression and rebirth. This scene reaffirms Knocks self-reliance.

In summary, the subject is the principles of transcendentalism from the 19th century, which were expressed in this movie. During the course of the movie, both destructive and constructive consequences of transcendentalism in a conformist, institutional setting transpire. Unfortunately, nothing essentially reformed with the institution, but the boys established knowledge that would supersede new ideas for coming generations. The movie itself provided quality entertainment for the untrained mind.