

Naturalism in stephen cranes the open boat

Literature



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Naturalism in Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat" This study will analyze a short story known as the open Boat, written by Stephen Crane in 1897. In this story, Crane narrates his own life experiences, in an open boat for thirty hours. The story entails a ship he sailed on, which sank in the coast of Florida. The ship sank after hitting a sandbar. This essay will seek to focus on naturalism in the story. The study will include clear case examples from the story, which justifies that it falls into the category of naturalism.

Naturalism in the Open Boat

Naturalism refers to a philosophical model, which explains everything on the basis of natural causes. This model places emphasis on the role of environment on human characters. Stephen Crane uses literary Naturalism in the story called the Open boat. Crane emphasizes how the universe affects human characters (Dersch, 2010 p 4). He portrays nature as uncaring, as the universe lacks order. Crane portrays a scenario where man looks for sign and order in the universe when it seems that man lacks purpose in nature. For example, at an instance in the story, he states that the sea can be termed as disadvantageous (Crane, 1993 p 57).

The four men in the story get tired in the life boat; their death seems about to happen incase the sea does not calm. The waves in the sea continue bringing fatigue, which persists. Crane writes the men's thoughts; this portrays the lack of order in the universe. For example, the men believe that if they are going to be drowned, they will drown (Dersch, 2010 p 5). Their words explain the loss of hope due to the uncertainties of the universe. For example, they desperately wonder whether they went to the sea to have their noses dragged away by nature. Despite their hard work, the four men did not reach the land they wanted. This can be termed as unfair nature of <https://assignbuster.com/naturalism-in-stephen-cranes-the-open-boat/>

the natural universe. They could have reached the land they wanted if the universe had any order (Crane, 1993 p 59).

In the story, Crane demonstrates that man seeks to look for order and signs in nature. For example, he talks of a bird kept away from the captain's head. The others interpreted the bird as threatening. To demonstrate this, they interpreted the bird as a negative sign. Man has to struggle for survival since the universe does not concern itself with humankind's affairs. For example, the characters in the story face indifference (Crane, 1993 p 60). They only survive due to cooperation and persistence. As Crane asserts, concern for other people and sympathy helps human beings survive against nature. He further portrays naturalism by his assertion that the universe cannot bend to man's will. Human beings have to turn to each other to overcome the ill deeds of nature (Crane, 1993 p 64).

Thus, in conclusion, Crane portrays naturalism in his story, the open boat. The open boat is an excellent example of a story that uses literary naturalism. The story has multiple scenarios, which describe the nature as uncaring. The story also portrays lack of order in the universe. Events in the story indicate that man looks for order as well as signs in nature. Crane has demonstrated that man may not have a purpose in nature.

Works Cited

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