

Abstract



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Name: Lecturer: Course: Date: Abstract This essay focuses on the relationship that exists between horses and humanity, showing character of horses that depict the life of a human being as well as feelings. The essay is based on “ The Horse Whisperer” by Nicholas Evans, and uses other secondary and scholarly sources to support its argument as well as the critique. A horse, being a living mode of transport for human beings is unlike other modes since it has feelings and requires establishing a relationship with in order to enable communication between the rider and horse as well as make a team.

More so, the horse in this literal work has been used to illustrate the life of a human being and his reaction towards life events. Table of Contents Pg number Abstract

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14 Introduction Horses are some of the animals that man keeps and has to have a relationship with in order to ride them and communicate in a way

that the horse understands what the rider wants, for instance the direction to take.

This essay examines the relationship between humanity and horses by giving focus on the horse as a mirror to the human inner feelings and a depiction of human daily life with events that shape their lives. The topic discussed in this essay is quite interesting as it seeks to find out how, through communication, a horse builds a relationship with the rider, making them a team. Being able to build a relationship with the horse may in turn help build a relationship between people.

The essay focuses on how, healing a horse can heal people in the same way, noting that when a person is troubled, the horse is troubled as well. As the title suggests – the relationship between humanity and horses – this essay has also focused on a horse's feelings after a traumatic event, which depicts the same reaction in human beings such as detachment from life when something terrible happens. The essay is based on the work of Nicolas Evans, the Horse Whisperer. I explore how the relationship between the horse and humanity has been depicted in this work.

The essay seeks to answer the relationship that exists between a person – the rider – and the horse in terms of their connection and attachment.

Background Information One morning Grace, the daughter of Annie and Robert, sets out for a horse ride with Judith, her neighborhood friend.

Unfortunately, they slide off a cliff into a country road and hit by a truck. Her friend dies together with her horse while Grace is maimed and has to have her leg amputated.

Her horse, Pilgrim is wounded too, and in pain he runs off into the woods as the pain drives him mad making him violent. Annie refuses to allow the horse to be killed fearing that its death will affect her daughter in a negative way. The family relationship is deeply affected by this accident as Grace has lost her will to live while her mother is doing all she can for her.

Grace swears that she will never ride on horse back again after the traumatic event while Pilgrim gets violent and cannot be ridden. Annie, in her quest to bring her daughter back to her normal self feels that healing the horse will heal her daughter. This brings her to the horse whisperer Tom, a man who has spent his life curing horses from their problems and has the power to communicate and tame even wild ones. Annie sets out with her daughter and Pilgrim from New York where they lived, leaving her husband behind, for Montana, where the whisperer has a ranch. Annie's relationship with her daughter worsens and she refuses to talk to her on their way (Evans, 22).

Upon arrival, Tom realizes that the problem is not only the horse but also the relationship between mother and daughter. He understands the feelings of the horse, where pain has affected its mental conditions, which in turn illustrates the problems with the mother and daughter. He starts to have feelings for Annie, and feels that through the horse he can heal their problems as well: for Annie. As the horse heals, so does the mother and daughter relationship, and they are seen having a conversation that makes the mother realize she is not as perfect as the daughter thinks she is.

When Grace realizes that Pilgrim is healing she starts to feel better and little by little overcomes the trauma and starts to ride. By this time the

relationship between Annie and Tom has grown until just before they are about to head back for New York when Grace finds out. She rides to the forest out of anger. Tom saves her from wild mustangs when he separates a stallion and Pilgrim, who are fighting.

However, when confronting the stallion to save Grace, he is struck by its hooves and ends up dead. Relationship between Pilgrim and the Characters
The horse in this work relates to the healing process that people go through to overcome their fears in life such as Grace and Annie. More so, it is evident that horses respond to traumatic events just as human beings do, as we see a troubled horse due to the pain Pilgrim goes through. This is the same for Grace who loses the will to live after the accident. Troubled by the pain and the thought of losing a leg had a negative impact on her life and she was no longer the same. In life, people are faced with many events that change their lives either for the better or for worse.

However, from the film, it is evident that it is the choice one makes that determines the effects of events upon one's life. Grace decided to detach herself from her usual lively self after the accident and the effect was quite negative on her, making her feel incapacitated and angry about life. Her mother realized that she needed to go through a healing process that would make her view life as she did before. She makes a choice to take her daughter along with Pilgrim to see the whisperer in order to try to save Grace from the trauma she went through. Just like Grace, Pilgrim had gone through pain that withdrew him from his normal self and made him angry towards life hence becoming violent. It is evident that the horse needed healing just like Grace to be in position to return to his normal activities and

agree to be ridden. The whisperer, Tom, is able to look beyond the eyes and changes the inner feelings of the troubled horse through retraining. This indicates that it may take the help of another person to overcome traumas that we may not be able to recognize and to remain true to ourselves.

Through retraining the horse, Grace is able to look through herself and realize that she could heal too. One relationship between horses and people is the ability to have inner feelings that majority of people think are not present in horses or other animals. Just as people go through a healing process with therapists, horses too need such healing. However, from the beginning where the veterinary and other people wanted the horse dead, Annie asked quite a sensible question concerning her daughter: whether she should go through the same to save her from the pain she experienced. People thought it was logic that they kill the horse to end its misery while Annie recognized that the horse represented what Grace was going through and felt killing the horse would kill a part of her. She was able to realize that healing the horse was going to heal Grace. Humanity is about having feelings for others and caring for them. The horse also shows feelings for human beings where Pilgrim is angry at life for what happened to his rider and his relationship with Grace is ruined since he would not allow anybody, including her, to ride him.

It is clear that horses are not ridden just because they have to be ridden; rather, a relationship exists between the rider and the horse, just as people choose with whom to have relationships. The whisperer is the healer in this case and manages to have a good relationship with horses. The whisperer is presented as a therapist who heals the horses and in turn heals people. This

is highlighted where Tom believes that through healing the horse, he will have healed people from their problems since the horse is their reason of visiting his ranch.

Earlier before Annie and her daughter arrive, he mentioned that he heals horses as well as people's problems. The whisperer is able to connect with the horses through his instincts and experience. He manages to communicate with the horses without rambling, as human beings do and the horses are able to read from his expression.

This proves that horses do communicate through observing a person. Tom is able to mend the relationship between Grace and Pilgrim until she could ride him where we see her standing on the horse, with tears streaming down her face. The horse looks up at her and there is a kind of bond and reassurance illustrating forgiveness.

Through stroking and touching him, Grace is able to reassure Pilgrim of their relationship. When she mounts Pilgrim, she hugs him around the neck for reassurance and encouragement to start riding. This shows a mending of a relationship that had been broken considering Pilgrim could not let anybody ride him. As she stands on the horse someone comments that the horse had a choice to either fight off or accept life as it was, which he did. People have the choice of choosing to accept situations, as they are when they are hurt, or choose to live in their misery. Pilgrim chooses to accept life as it was and decided to go back to his normal life before the accident happened. Pilgrim's acceptance of life is also seen in Grace and she embraces her life back with happiness when she lifts her hands up to indicate her victory (Evans, 430).

Robert, before leaving the ranch says that he felt as if what was happening to the horse was also happening to him, where he had to make a choice whether to fight the way things were or accept them. Robert related the horse with his life concerning their relationship with Annie where he felt that things were not the same again as they were before. Just as Pilgrim needed assurance from Grace to ride her again, Robert needed assurance from Annie that she loved him before agreeing to be with her again.

On the other hand, Annie related to the horse in the same way where she wanted its healing to heal her daughter. More still, through the healing of the horse, she was able to see herself for the person she truly was. Annie is able to see the pain her daughter is going through and realizes how much she had grown apart from her daughter since the horse had become her favorite companion. She decides to risk her job for her daughter to make up for the many times she has been away concentrating on her work. She relates to the horse as the means to win her daughter's trust again feeling that they have a connection. After the accident, she is able to learn that she has been entangled in her work, forgetting her duties as a mother and she had lost sense of humanity. This was illustrated by the distance that was created between the horse and the rider giving Annie a reflection of her life as she realizes that the horse has a connection with her daughter.

The horse has been related to most of the people, depicting what their life has been, and through Pilgrim, people like Grace, Annie, Robert and Tom have been able to reflect on their life. Tom was in the same situation where he had to decide whether to accept the way things are or not towards the end when he is saving Grace from the stallion and chooses to die by

confronting the stallion. In addition, the life of a human being has been attached to that of a horse, where both react the same way. We see this where Judith dies as her horse dies, and Grace is maimed just as her horse is maimed. They both react in the same way, and become negative towards life by withdrawing. Moreover, Grace only manages to heal as the horse heals, and she is completely healed when she is able to ride her favorite animal. The author suggests that people like animals have a chance of healing from their pain and trauma if they get the right person to make them realize the condition they are in and the way to go about it.

The main relationship between the horse and humanity is the way a horse requires to establish a bond with its rider to know what the rider wants through the signs used to relay information to it. These signs include indicating for the horse to run, walk or stop (Hausberger, Roche, Henry & Visser, 5). Personal View and Evaluation The relationship between the horse and humankind is not only depicted in the story but is also a reflection of the outside world. As strongly depicted, the horse is portrayed like a human being in the literature. Its characters and behavior resemble those of a human being. The events taking place in this book can also be associated with the outside world. The horse may represent other horses and even animals and the other characters in the book represent the rest of humankind.

The strong relationship between Pilgrim and Grace can be identified in the real world, illustrating the relationship between humanity and horses. Grace greets Pilgrim and calls him “ boy” before they go for riding with her friend Judith and her horse. Grace sees her horse as a fellow human being instead

of an animal like the way it is. She seems to close up a love/affection that she should be getting from real people. In the real world, many people call their pet names and even talk to them as though they were talking to fellow human beings.

Those who live alone are fond of depicting such characters. They normally try to fill a gap that should be filled by a real person. Characters in this literal work try to use the horse to make up for their own weaknesses.

Annie refuses to let go of the horse when Elizabeth tells her that the horse is too weak and in too much pain to survive. She reacts as though by losing the horse, she would be making a mistake. Her daughter had just had an accident and she was not around, the relationship with her husband was not good and she had lost her daughter's friend in the same accident. Having Elizabeth work on Pilgrim meant that she was trying to do something right. This is regularly seen in the real world. People hold on to pets that are about to die or even make other people go through a lot of pain in order to try and make up for their own weaknesses. The feelings and emotions of the people are directly reflected by the horse.

Grace is traumatized by the accident and the loss of her friend, not to mention the loss of her leg. In the same way, Pilgrim's reactions are a sign of the trauma of the accident and Grace who seems to be distant. Grace is reluctant to ride the horse again and Pilgrim is hostile towards being ridden again. These are reflections of the real world in the behaviors of people and animals. There are animals, which are traumatized when they get hurt or lose their 'masters'. The relationship between the people and the horse is a

reflection of the relationship between people and animals. Annie takes Grace and Pilgrim to Tom's ranch in order to seek treatment. She wants both the horse and her daughter to get better as much as she wants the relationship between her and her daughter to reconcile.

Tom, the horse whisperer, acts as a "doctor" to the three. Annie is ready to give equal attention to the horse and her daughter as though they were both of equal value to her. In real life, there are times people seek outside help, even though not professional help in order to get well or recover from their own troubles. Tom acts as the outside help. Fortunately, he succeeds in his assignment. Throughout the plot, the horse has been illustrating relationships between people, where Annie's family relationship is ruined as her daughter does not even want to talk to her. Her relationship with her husband is ruined and she no longer has the same feeling for him.

Robert comes to the realization after the accident when he has to ask for assurance about most of the things they planned on doing after the accident occurred. Before the accident, Robert and Annie were not the same as they were before, and their relationship had been going down. The accident makes. More so, Annie can only think of Tom when her husband visits at the ranch. The horse has been likened to their life, where as it heals, the relationships heal too one side where the mother and the daughter come to terms, while that of her parents seems to grow far apart. More over, as the relationship of the horse and the whisperer grows, so does the relationship between the Annie and Tom grow more. The story however, does manage to show what it means to be humane, filled with feeling that highlight real life experiences and how love does grow, with relation to a horse's feeling that

comes to love back its rider as it did before it was disrupted. Critical Analysis Horses, unlike other human modes of transport like cars or bicycles are living and should therefore be accorded a caring relationship unlike that directed to the non-living assets.

It is true that various individuals have created profound affection and association with their cars especially when it is the first vehicle or the only one they have for the matter. Similarly, it is also desirable and good to acquire a similar association with a horse if one expects to enjoy riding the animal. In fact, the caring association noted between an individual and a car in terms of careful driving, frequent check-up and maintenance schedules with the mechanics in order to maintain the vehicle at a working state is the same that is mandated with horses (Hawkeyetack, 2011).

The most fundamental element of creating such a relationship begins with small conversations directed from the owner to the horse. The rationale given to this practice is that the horse's mind familiarizes itself with the given voice and therefore is able to create an identity towards the same. It acts similarly to a password in a computer and therefore in instances where the horse maybe restless or in anguish, the owners voice acts as a tranquilizer. From the film, Grace has established an intimate relationship with Pilgrim as evidenced by the opening scene before her meeting with Judith. In fact, Grace uses intimate words like ' boy' and ' beautiful' to address Pilgrim. As Grace moves towards the horse, it allows her to stroke the muzzle and in a pleasant gesture pushes the owner softly on the back. Judith too talks to her horse before the ride begins (Evans, 2). Tom as the

horse whisperer has actually perfected the communication aspect with horses, enabling him to converse with a large number.

At his initial meeting with hurt Pilgrim, he opens with a hand salutation that is believed to be an indication of esteem and trust between a human and a horse. Pilgrim comprehends the gesture and allows for a moment of association that he had refused any other person after the accident. Scholars in horse psychology have critically disproved of this bitter association occurring between Grace and Pilgrim after the mishap. Once intimacy is created between a horse and its owner, then it is practically impossible for the animal to become unruly towards the human subsequent to a traumatic occurrence.

In fact, a single instance only affects the horse's psychology in a less impressive manner and it is only with the repetition of the same occurrence or one that bears similarities that unruly behavior can be noted. It is quite normal for an injured horse to exhibit aggressive behavior with a repetition of similar sites. For instance, during Pilgrim's occurrences there were the cliff fall and the truck.

Therefore, it would be considered perfectly normal if Pilgrim becomes aggressive upon sighting the same objects, as the brain tends to associate this with the accident. However, Grace is still embedded within the horse's memory as a friend and therefore unless the memories are overwritten by bad ones that reflect the owner as an enemy, then the loving relation should be maintained. In fact, animal psychiatrists attribute the personality modification exhibited by Pilgrim only to severe torture instances that lead to

the animal bearing mixed feelings to an individual until the final revelation that enmity has been created. Tom largely knows the owner's significance in terms of associations and therefore enlists Grace's assistance in working towards the recovery of Pilgrim. As the two work towards recreating Pilgrim Tom needs to re-train him yet in a number of the sessions he tends to exhibit unprofessional handling. For instance, at one point before the arrival of the Grace, Pilgrim and Annie, Tom is seen to approach a wild horse and kneels before it to try to calm it; this is an unrealistic element from the fact that the occurrence may be fatal if the horse does not stop charging. Additionally, in another instance Tom uses a rope to try breaking a ferocious horse with his finger bearing an enormous ring that may easily be caught in the rope and led to a fatal occurrence. Therefore, such details tend to act as discrediting elements for the film requiring a revision if a succinct element is to be reflected between horses and human relations.

Conclusion As stated above, establishing a relationship between humanity and horses does not come automatically, rather it is earned through repeated trust during training. A horse is a transport mode just like a car, bicycle and a motorbike. However, the difference is that a horse is an animal with feelings and instincts of its own unlike a vehicle or motorcycle that is lifeless and is only controlled.

A horse has its own feelings and will to exist on its own, and doing what the rider wants requires convincing and trust. A horse has to be taught to take orders from its rider since it has a will to resist unlike a locomotive that is only controlled. It is therefore important to establish a relationship that builds trust between the rider and the horse that can be considered friendly

so that there can be better communication. This way the rider and the horse make a good team while doing something together (Hawkeyetack, 2011). One of the suggested methods of establishing a relationship with a horse is talking, where the horse hears but does not respond verbally. Throughout this work, Tom has been talking to the horses often and manages to win their trust.

The essence of talking to the horse is giving it a chance to bond with the rider through recognizing his or her voice just like a person will differentiate the voice of one person from another. The horse is able to respond to the voice of its rider as shown highlighted when Grace says hello to Pilgrim and he responds by tapping on his hooves and coming towards her. More so, she talks to the horse when riding after the healing process occurs and the bond is restored.

Horses are able to make out who their owner is and respond better to needs of the rider with a long established relationship making them a team. Many of the professional riders of horses have come to appreciate the fact that building a good relationship with a horse makes his performance better and they feel good serving them as opposed to when they are mishandled. Handling them gently is the best way to achieve results (Lyons, 2011). This work shows that indeed, there is a special relationship between humans and horses, which should be nurtured to ensure that both gain as much from the relationship as possible. Works cited Evans, Nicholas.

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