

Literary Commentary on the Book Disgrace

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Introduction

J.M Coetzee is considered to be the most prominent and famous writer, who got the recognition by publishing the book *Disgrace*. The important issues of life are discussed in this book throughout. Specifically, the issues mentioned in the book commonly occur in South Africa. The cultural issues that exist in South Africa are the main issues discussed in the book. The book also won the Booker Prize award for highlighting fear and suspicion. It was written during the time when political change took place, and those changes failed to address human misery. The first-ever book, which was published in South Africa, talks about the conditions of human living conditions explicitly regardless of nationality, race, and point of view (Opheim, 46). Furthermore, the analysis of the reason for writing this book the writer, along with the cultural issues that are mentioned in this book, will be further discussed.

Discussion

During that time, the new constitution was enacted, claiming equal rights for all men and women regardless of sexual orientation. It was the same time when violence was present all over Africa, and the framers who were mainly affected by this issue were leaving their work and migrating from the affected areas. Giving equal rights served the purpose of protecting the women who were facing rape and violence (Propst, 8).

The book starts with this particular issue at the start regarding the condition of women in South Africa, and the rape of Lucy is set as an example of the current condition. Lucy is the daughter of the main character, David. The rape took place when three men entered her house for the purpose of stealing, but those men brutally raped Lucy, which she had to hide for personal reasons. The justice system was weak, and because of that, she let go of the thought of reporting the incident. As mentioned earlier, the constitution, which was passed to give equal rights to all men and women, wasn't affected in the society culturally. The clear discrimination between the two genders was the reason that Lucy was not willing to address the issue, which later affected her relationship with her father. She thought that her father, David, was the same and misjudged her. The fear of being judged made her depressed and increased her suffering.

The disgrace, as the name of the novel suggests, was the core issue which is culturally affected the society, and then comes to rape which is addressed in the novel. "Lucy is raped by three men as they rob her house. The rape is a violent, hate-filled act"(pg.85-disgrace J.M. Coetzee). Due to the issue being frequently heard in society, her rape, even being done by people she didn't know, made her

take that incident personally.

Another issue that the author mentions in the novel is justice. The issues related to justice were surrounded mostly by innocence and guilt. However, the author further talks about the moral issues which were present in the justice department. The investigation that took place during that time against Laurie for sexual harassment shows the flaws in criminal justice. The injustice was not only suffered by Laurie, but even Lucy also suffered from the same thing. The injustice to Lucy is because of the current situation, and despite reporting what happened to Lucy, she knew nothing would happen in her favor.

The author also discusses geriatric sexuality in the book. The main character, David, who was at the age of 52, was sexually active. He was married twice, and at the start of the book, he was found with a prostitute to fulfill his sexual needs, which he was all worried about. The story in the book also talks about the incident where Laurie slept with his student, and the issue later raised as a result of the student having to drop out because of the difficult situation the student was facing. Laurie was also fired because of the humiliation situation he had to see publicly. "Stick to your own kind (Disgrace J.M Coetzee-pg 128." were the lines he had to hear when leaving.

In the end, the youth was free from all hurdles while experiencing the freedom that was experienced when the whites were no longer governing the country. The change that took place at that time can be adopted, or it can be resisted, but Lucy adopted the change and left with the guy who proposed to her. The reason was not love solely, but she was pregnant during that time because of the rape. She started living on a farm with him. Her later life shows the condition women had to face during that time because the incident that happened to her was an issue for her, not for society. Those women who had to experience similar dark experiences were considered to be disgraceful rather than any justice provided to them "at ground level period with nothing, not anything, but with no cards no weapons, no property, and no dignity? Like a dog (pg 205)".

Another aspect related to Lucy was that her father David's objection was no longer a problem for her because she was looking into a new life with a bright future ahead. David was disturbed by the fact that the baby which would be born into life would be in result of rape which made him miserable. He showed his anger by killing animals, which also shows that the lives of humans and animals both shared a similar faith of not being valued for their lives (Conti, 15).

Conclusions

In conclusion, the book Disgrace teaches the lesson that cultural aspects influence all lives, and the lives of women are deeply affected, which makes them lead miserable lives. Professor Lurie, even holding the noble position of teaching students and guiding them, crossed the line and slept with his own students. The book can be related to the misery which all humans have to face in their lives.

Works Cited

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