



Individualism: A Study in The Old Man and The Sea

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Abstract

This article focuses on the individualistic difficulties in *The Old Man and The Sea* which is a classic novel written by Ernest Hemingway. The individualistic difficulties which Frustration of the protagonist arises from the disrespectful behavior of his fellow citizens. The story revolves around Santiago an aging Cuban fisherman who embarks on a challenging journey to catch a giant Marlin. Despite his physical limitations and the relentless forces of nature Santiago's determination and resilience are tested as he engages in a battle of endurance with the Martin. The researcher studies the character of Santiago and the portrayal of the relationship between Santiago and Manolin in the novel. The aim of the article is to understand the importance of not giving up in adverse situations. The humanistic theory is applied in relation to Santiago's inner strength and capabilities to prove his worth and regain his reputation as a skilled fisherman. **Keywords:** Positivity, Human condition, Belief, Determination, Consistency.

Introduction

Ernest Hemingway's timeless novel *The Oldman and the Sea* relates the thrilling tale of Santiago an elderly Cuban fisherman and his epic encounter with a massive marlin in the Gulf Stream. Hemingway depicts the fight of one man against the forces of nature and the profound sense of victory that may be achieved in

the face of hardship in a way that is both powerful and moving. The novel is regarded as a recognised classic of literature since it tells a story of perseverance on both a physical and spiritual level. His final significant work *The Oldman and the Sea* which was published in 1952 and won the 1953 Pulitzer Prize for fiction was written in 1951 in Bimini, Bahamas.

Glimpse of the Novel

The protagonist is an elderly Cuban fisherman called Santiago who continued fishing by himself in the Gulf Stream for eighty-four days without catching anything. Manolin has been Santiago's apprentice, but his family hasn't been happy about it. The elderly Cuban fisherman's failure to catch even a single fish, despite the little boy's continued support of the old man with food and bait, is the cause of the boy's parents' compulsion towards him. Manolin's offering of food to Santiago helps to build interpersonal relationships between them, as discussed by Suganya et al in their article "Gender Performance on the Reinvigoration via Food" (Suganya et al 888). Manolin receives life lessons from the elderly guy as well as mentoring from Santiago, which helps to link the lessons Santiago offers about his unfortunate character. (web)

The little youngster attempts to persuade the elderly guy that his bad luck would eventually turn around. "It was only his turn" (Hemingway 15). Santiago launches his boat farther from shore than usual, sets up fishing lines, and drops his harpoon just as he closes the clasp on a massive marlin. Long stretches of time passed before the old guy could hoist the marlin. "The line was going out fast but steadily and the fish did not panic" (Hemingway 23). The fish pulls the boat in such a way that Santiago is also being pulled towards falling into the water.

The fishing line is causing Santiago ongoing discomfort. After overcoming all of his challenges, the elderly man eagerly considers the marlin's market value. Sharks attacked marlin because of the scent of the blood trail that the marlin had left behind. The old guy returned to his cabin empty-handed after realising there was no marlin meat left when he reached the coast. The other fisherman gathered around the fish carcass the following morning. "Let no one disturb him" (Hemingway 46). Once Santiago was in his bed and secure, the kid was content. The elderly guy goes back to sleep while having a dream about lions playing on African beaches.

Individualism

The protagonist, Santiago, is the personification of individualism. In spite of the ridicule and skepticism of the younger fishermen in his village, he remains a lone figure and chooses to carry on with his life's work. "No fish will come along so great that he will prove us wrong" (Hemingway 8). It shows a steadfast commitment to his personal principles, which is a fundamental aspect of individualism, that he is determined to prove that he is a skilled fisherman. As discussed by Suganya et al. in the article, "Communal Expectancy and the Authentic Self of Men and Transgenders - Arms and the Man by George Bernard Shaw and Birthday by Meredith Russo", Santiago must be determinant and aggressive in his task of fishing.

"The crowd in today's world and down the ages expects the hackney of gender roles to be well played.

Specifically, society expects an individual to behave, groom and express themselves based on their gender. For instance, women are expected to be polite, nurturing and meek whereas, men are generally anticipated to be aggressive and bold, transgenders are expected to abide by ostracism.” (Suganya et al. 879)

Santiago's struggle in the water represents one of his life's struggles. “Down there six hundred feet in the cold water in the dark” (Hemingway 15). Along with the marlin, he is also up against the harsh conditions, tiredness, and his own physical limitations. This single fight is a reflection of the human condition, where people frequently find themselves in trying circumstances and must rely on their own fortitude to persevere and prevail.

The individualistic subject is given more depth by Hemingway's narrative technique. His concise and economical writing leaves a lot out, allowing readers to deduce and extrapolate Santiago's actions and thoughts' deeper meaning. The significance of self-awareness in the quest of individualism is highlighted through Santiago's reflective times on the water as he thinks back on his life and the decisions he has made.

Being adrift at sea for days intensifies Santiago's sense of solitude as he fights the marlin. “The speed of the line was cutting his hands badly” (Hemingway 31). His solitude serves as a crucible for testing and honing his character. The actual individualism of Santiago emerges in these alone circumstances. He perseveres against all odds, demonstrating his resiliency, creativity, and steadfast resolve.

Santiago's relationship with the marlin is a moving illustration of independence. Santiago values the marlin as a formidable foe, appreciating its power and elegance. “A man can be destroyed but not defeated” (Hemingway 38). The idea that true individualism is about recognising the intrinsic value of all beings and pursuing a path based on one's own ideas is highlighted by the reciprocal respect between man and nature.



Conclusion

Through Santiago's heroic struggle in the merciless sea, *The Old Man and the Sea* explores individualism in rich detail. Despite the fact that Santiago only brought the bones of the marlin back to shore after so many struggles in the water, his confidence has never wavered. This book helped us to understand that there are no age restrictions. A person can reach their goal by setting strong goals and striving for virtuous thoughts. This book demonstrated the author's strong conviction that individuality, built in self-determination and unflinching will, may result in the most deep and lasting successes in life. Santiago's journey serves as a timeless reminder of this.

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