

Zainab Waseem

Ms. Julia

LEH 355

April 30, 2018

Lennie in *Of Mice and Men* and Helen Keller in *The Miracle Worker*, both have disabilities that make their life very difficult. Lennie and Helen's disabilities have caused them to act in a monstrous way. In addition, in screening stereotypes people with disabilities are shown to act monstrous. Also, *Disabled Individuals in American Literature*, describes how disabled characters from films influence society to believe disabled people are monstrous. Basically, there are many ways Helen, Lennie, *Disabled Individuals in American Literature* and people with disabilities in screening stereotypes are shown to be monstrous.

In *Of Mice and Men*, the book states "the first man was small and quick, dark of face, with restless eyes and sharp, strong features. Every part of him was defined: small, strong hands, slender arms, a thin and bony nose. Behind him walked his opposite, a huge man, shapeless of face, with large, pale eyes, with wide, sloping shoulders; and he walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws." He is known to have strength like a bear but the way he acts like is a dog. In the first place, Lennie is described as a huge person and he behaves like an animal. Furthermore, when Lennie gets in trouble he doesn't feel guilty of what he has done. Lennie loves to pet mice, but he always ends up killing them. Lennie's strength and his lack of intelligence makes him a very dangerous person. In addition, Lennie needs George to keep him out of trouble.

George has been taking good care of Lennie, but George finds it very difficult to take care of him, because he always gets into trouble. George says “ God a mighty if I was alone, I could live so easy. I could get a job an work an no trouble.” Moreover, Lennie’s monstrous behaviour leads him to killing Candy’s wife. In other words, Lennie was so use to killing the mice and acting in a way that was unusual for other people caused him to kill Candy’s wife.

In screening stereotypes monster disabled characters are shown to be very dangerous to others. Longmore writes “further the depiction of the disabled person as a “monster” and the criminal characterization both express to varying degrees the notion that disability involves the loss of an essential part of one humanity”. This totally relates to *Of Mice and Men*, because it shows that Lennie kept holding on a girl’s red dress and didn’t let go. The whole town thought that he raped her so George and Lennie left town. Lennie had the weird habit of grabbing onto things and patting them. However, Lennie wasn’t a mean guy. He brought a pup in and George ordered him to reveal it. Basically, he was like a kid who didn’t mean any harm. Furthermore, Lennie kills Curly's wife just like the way he had killed the mice in the past, which portrayed him as a monster. Basically, he’s shown that he can’t control his behavior, which is why it leads him to killing Curly’s wife. Another example, of screening stereotype is the *Miracle Worker*. Helen Keller behavior is also depicted like a monster in the movie *Miracle Worker*. In the first place, Helen was trying to dig out Martha’s eyes, with a scissor. However, she is unsuccessful at it, because her mom comes and tries to take the scissor away from her, but her mother is not able to take it away from her, so she leaves the scissors with her.

Basically, Helen is a stubborn child, who knows that if she acts in a bad way, she will get what she wants. Mr. Keller is very worried about Helen's behavior, which is why he thinks it is not safe for Helen to run around and should be prevented from leaving the place. However, her mom thinks it is not a good idea to do that, because she thinks Helen is not an animal who should be caged up. Moreover, whenever Annie is around, Helen always attacked Annie. Basically, Helen felt that Annie was trying to change her, which she didn't like at all. Furthermore, Helen's eating habits were bad, she would eat food like an animal. Annie did not like the way she ate, but Helen's parent was okay with it. Mr. Keller says she's accustomed to helping herself from all things to whatever she wants and yeah well I'm not accustomed to it". Basically, in a way Helens parents had turned her into a monstrous person. In addition, when Annie tries to teach Helen manners she doesn't like it and has long fight with Annie.

Helen, in story of my life is something different. She says "The most important day I remember in all my life is the one on which my teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan, came to me. I am filled with wonder when I consider the immeasurable contrasts between the two lives which it connects". She is excited to meet Anne, which was the total opposite of how Anne was shown in the movie. Helen Keller, is different from what was depicted in the movie. Basically, she is much more calmer and nicer than the way she was portrayed in the movie. Helen was excited to learn things from Anne Sullivan. Basically, there is a significant difference of what Helen was like in the movie and how Helen really acted. She says "I was like that ship before my education began, only I was without compass or sounding line, and had no way of knowing how near the harbor was.

"Light! give me light!" was the wordless cry of my soul, and the light of love shone on me in that very hour". She thought that because of Anne she has a new way of seeing the world and becoming educated without actually seeing and hearing.

Our society thinks that disabled people are less than human, evil, and monstrous, even though they are no different from anyone else. In England, Canada, and the United States, in the 20th century a common way of entertaining people, was watching People that had missing or additional limbs, obesity, smallness, or tallness were shown to the audiences, who were thought as nature's mistakes. It is this state that thrilled and scared the audience. This cultural norm was formed across literature from children's stories to adult novels and plays until the present time. Any type of impairment usually made a character look like a villain or a monster. Basically, children's tales often feature Cyclops, giants, evil one-armed captains, and those who can be identified as evil simply because they are considered physically very different from the beautiful good people. It is because people understand easily the most obvious things, physical characteristics have always been used to set evil people apart from good people. For example, Captain Hook is shown to be a evil character he walks and talks like a monster. In addition, the hook hand makes him even more monstrous. The reason for this type of image is to show an idea that goes back to the basic developmental patterns of childhood. Basically, children are shown movies that show disabled characters as an evil person, which gives society the idea that disabled people are monstrous. Thus, people understand the clues that concrete objects provide to enhance their understanding of ideas and situations. In addition, clues that have been created by society is parents that were evil were considered

to have dwarf kids; mental illness is still often believed to be the result of possession by the devil or demons. “There are, latent to the dominant culture, ideas about handicap and disability from an earlier period which still have considerable force. An example is the notion, which runs through the history of Western civilization and is legitimated by various religious teachings, that disability indicates possession by the devil or by an evil force, or is the outcome of evil doing” Basically, it is thought that it is a punishment for people’s evil doings that is why their kids are disabled.

All in all, Lennie disability was something uncontrollable, which is why he acted in a monstrous way. He is also described like a huge person, which makes him look a lot like a monster. In screening stereotypes, disabled characters are shown to be very dangerous even though they are not. Helen, was shown to be spoiled by her parents, which is why it caused her to also act in a monstrous way. However, she was not really a monstrous person. *Disabled Individuals in American Literature*, states that our society creates this image of disabled people being monstrous.

Work Cited

Beauchamp, Miles. "Disabled Individuals in American Literature." *Rdsjournal.org*, 2014, www.rdsjournal.org/index.php/journal/article/viewFile/179/574.

Longmore, Paul. *Why I Burned My Book*. Temple University Press, 2009

Penn, Arthur, director. *The Miracle Worker*.

Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*. Penguin Books, 1993

Of Mice and Men

Lennie and George were two interesting characters in *Mice and Men*. George seemed to be really close to Lennie. However, at the same time he didn't want to take care of Lennie because he was always getting in trouble. George says, "God a mighty if I was alone, I could live so easy. I could get a job an work an no trouble." Moreover, if George knew that Lennie is most likely to get in trouble why would he leave him alone in the barn by himself? In other words, Lennie being alone by himself caused him to kill Curley's wife. It seemed like George was waiting for something bad to happen with Lennie, so he can kill him and get rid of him. I think if Lennie had been taken care properly, he wouldn't be in the situation he was. Furthermore, Lennie seems to like the things he kills such as the mice, does that mean he was attracted to Curley's wife?

Screening Stereotypes

Disabled villains are shown to be evil to normal people. In addition, disability is like a punishment to evil people. Basically, people with disability on screen are shown to not like non-disabled people and they would hurt them if they could. "Further, the depiction of the disabled person as a "monster" and the criminal characterization both express to varying degrees the notion that disability involves the loss of an essential part of one's humanity". I agree, with this because Lennie in Mice and Men was portrayed as a monster, because of his disability. Basically, disability in the article means loss of one's humanity. Moreover, disabled characters that are shown as a monster most likely like beautiful women who would reject them. We never know what might the disabled character do to these women.

Rain Man

Raymond, is autistic, who has amazing abilities. He can recall a lot of information. He can solve difficult math problems that would be hard for other people to do. Basically, in the movie the disable character is highly intelligent, but his brother Charlie Babbitt is trying to take advantage of his disability. In other words, people with disability are taken advantage of, because they are thought to be abnormal. For example, Charlie says Does he know how much money he's been left? No. He doesn't understand the concept of money. He doesn't understand the concept of money. He's just inherited \$3 million... and he doesn't understand the concept of money? Well, that is fuckin' poetic, don't you think? Good ol' Dad. Due to Raymond's conditions they thought he did not deserve to live a normal life, which is why he shouldn't have the money. In my opinion, everyone deserves to live a normal life, and shouldn't be taken advantage of because they are not like other people.

