

# It matters not what

someone is born, but what they grow to be (2023)

## OUTLINE

### Judging

#### 1. Introduction

Thesis Statement: Judging someone on the basis of something which was out of reach of one's control is two things: absurd and irrational. Therefore, one should be perceived on the basis of what one has become and not on what one initially was

#### 2. How one should not be judged on the basis of where one was born

#### 3. Philosophical ideas that reiterate that one must strive to change one's life rather than confining to prevalent norms

- a. Transcendentalism by Emerson
- b. 'God is Dead' by Nietzsche
- c. Existentialism by Sartre

#### 4. Literary depictions which present that one should be contemplated on what one has grown to be and not on who he used to be

- a. Someone's skin colour does not determine one's character
  - (i) To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
  - b. Being orphan does not restrain one to achieve big in life
  - (ii) Jane Eyre by

(2) Charlotte Bronte

c. Age and background do not define one's will power

(i) Anne of Green Gables

by Lucy Montgomery

d. Gender does not confine one's to particular roles

(i) Catherine Bennet by

Jane Austen

e. Morality and ethics are not confined to one's social status

(i) The Great Expectations

by Charles Dickens

f. Emancipation is earned

by embracing individuality

(i) Their Eyes were watching

God by Zora Hurston

(5) Renowned movements: How they were started and ended:

a. Feminist Movement

b. Civil Rights Movement

c. French Revolution

(6) Famous personalities who took reigns of their lives in hands and changed their lives for good:

a. From discriminated to world's champion - Boxer Muhammad Ali

b. From poor to world's richest athlete - Cristiano Ronaldo

c. From Janitor to America's  
first black President -  
Barack Obama

d. From drop out to world's  
largest apple's company  
founder - Steve Jobs

e. From blind to the one  
of the most learned and  
compassionate people -  
Hellen Keller

(7)

### Conclusion

Although the proverbial  
turtle had nothing in his favour in  
comparison with rabbit, but he had two  
things: courage and persistence. Through  
these, ~~he~~ changed the course of the race  
and set a precedent. Similarly, even  
though, if one does not have anything to  
be proud of in the beginning, one can  
always turn one's life upside down with  
determination and will. Judging one  
on the basis of something which was out  
of reach of one's control is two things:  
absurd and irrational. Therefore, one  
should be perceived on the basis of  
what one has become and not on what  
one initially was. Philosophical ideas  
such as Transcendentalism, God is Dead  
and Existentialism reiterate that one  
must strive to change the life instead

of confining to the prevalent norms. Moreover, literary depictions are also best examples to reinforce the idea that one should be judged on one's choice to become something and not one what one initially was. Writers such as Harper Lee, Charles Dickens, Charlotte Bronte, Jane Austen, Lucy Montgomery and Zora Hurston reiterate this view in their respective masterpieces. Furthermore, there are renowned movements or revolution such as Feminist movement, Civil Rights Movement and French Revolution which prove that it does not matter how something is started, what matters the most is that how it is concluded. In the last, renowned personalities who took reigns of their lives in their hands and became invincible and unstoppable further put ice on the cake and reiterate the main idea of not judging someone. These include Boxer Muhammad Ali, Cristiano Ronaldo, Barack Obama, Steve Jobs and Helen Keller. Therefore, one should never be shallow enough to judge someone on the basis of something which was not in one's hands, but on something which one purposely chose.

Greeks are considered as father of science and every piece of science has roots that can be dated back to Greeks. Among them, Plato is considered as one of the central figure of ancient Greek. Being an idealist, Plato gave his theory of Idealism in which he stated that what is seen in this world is actually a copy or imitation of what that is in real world. Plato developed this theme of Reality vs Perception which became centre of themes that dominated literature for centuries. Reality vs Perception states that it is not reality what can be seen and heard as Descartes said that senses can also deceive. Therefore, one should not judge someone on the basis of what one sees. It does not matter what someone is born, but what someone chooses to be.

Among a number of philosophical ideas that reiterate that one must strive to change one's life, Transcendentalism by Ralph Waldo Emerson remains the crucial one. It states that one should tread a new path of reconciliation with inner self to change their course of life instead of following the prevalent norms of the society. This would help one to strive for self-attainment and betterment as

one is judged on what he becomes. To illustrate, Emerson said, "what lies behind us, and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." Therefore, one must strive for betterment by following one's inner self and change one's course of life.

Second, Nietzsche's famous and most quoted line 'God is dead' further reiterates the need to choose one's own path. Nietzsche is often labelled as negator of God and nihilist for his immoral views on God. For example, Nietzsche said, "God is Dead. God remains dead. We have killed Him." (Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, 1882). Nietzsche did not negate God.

Rather, he perceived death of God as a liberating force. He believed that God cannot be perceived objectively, but rather God is an objective reality. Therefore, one should not confine to prevalent beliefs and must strive to find one's own path to prevail in society.

Last but not the least, Sartre's Existentialism condemns the notion of leaving everything to God and reinstates the need to prioritize oneself. Sartre, one of the influential figures

of 20<sup>th</sup> century, reinforces in his existentialist philosophy that man figures out everything in his life except how to live. One cannot rely on God for everything he does, but he must tread his own path and reach his own pavillion. Sartre said, "Existence precedes and rules essence." To sum up, one must take reigns of his life and do everything that can be in one's favour.

Literature is the reflection of life. It depicts the social, political, economical, psychological and prevalent beliefs belonging to that era. Similarly, literature has been used to depict the theme that one should not be judged on what he was born, but what one has become.

To start with, literature has been used to depict that someone's skin colour does not determine one's character. Harper Lee, in her masterpiece novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, sketches the character of Atticus Finch who is a renowned white lawyer and fighting a case in favour of a black man. The black man, named Tom, was wrongly accused of raping a white lady just for the fact that he was black. whereas,

white people were actually those behaving like savages. For example, Atticus says to his daughter, "You never really understand a person until you climb into his skin and walk around in it." (Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird)  
 To conclude, it is absurd to judge someone's character on the basis of one's skin colour and lineage.

Furthermore, literature has presented that being orphan does not restrain one to achieve big in life. Charlotte Bronte, in her famous novel, Jane Eyre, draws the character of Jane Eyre who was a born orphan, but she never let anyone to mortify her pride. Jane refuses to settle for less in her life and set precedent that who she was born does not matter, but what matters is how she grows into. Jane Eyre says, "I am no bird; and no net ensnares me; I am a free human being with an independent will" (Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre)

In conclusion, Bronte through Jane Eyre, reiterates that nothing restrains one to achieve big in life.



Third literature also depicts that age and background do not define one's will power. Lucy Montgomery, in her classic novel, Anne of the Green Gables, draws the character of Anne Shirley Gilbert who was orphan, brought up in orphanage and only 11 when she was adopted. However, she was ahead of her age, had bravery, imaginative power and inquisitive mind. She shunned all the barriers posed by her life and chooses to become an intellectual independent lady. She says, "Next to trying and winning, the best is trying and failing." (Lucy Montgomery, Anne of the Green Gables). Thus, it does not matter, as explained by Montgomery, how one is born and where, but how one chooses to be matters more.

In addition to these, literature has also explained that gender does not confine one to particular roles. Jane Austen, in her renowned novel, Pride and Prejudice, illustrates the character of Catherine Bennet who does not let her gender define her capabilities and ambitions. She proves herself to be an equal of male protagonist and never let him belittle her. To illustrate, she says, "Do not consider me now as an elegant female intending to

play you, but as a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart."  
 (Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice)  
 Thus, Jane Austen in her novel, presses the idea that what weighs more is the result and not how things were started.

Moreover, literature has also depicted that morality and ethics are not confined to one's social status. Charles Dickens, in his famous novel, The Great Expectations, has drawn the character of Pip, who is a poor boy with moral and ethical values, years to attain social mobility and material wealth. However, he gradually realizes in his journey of attaining wealth that he forsake his values for social status and delves into the pits of guilt. To explain, he says, "In a word I was too cowardly to do what I knew to be right, as I had been too cowardly to avoid doing what I knew to be wrong." (Charles Dickens, The Great Expectations) Therefore, Dickens reinstates the idea that social status does not determine one's values.

In the last, literature presents that emancipation of either man or woman is earned by embracing individuality. Zora Neal Hurston, in her novel, Their Eyes were watching God draws the character of Janie who was belittle first for being woman and then for being black. Janie chooses to chase her horizon and finds her voice as a black woman in a world dominated by men and gatekept by white people. For instance, she says, "Some people could look at a mud puddle and see an ocean with ships." (Zora Neal Hurston, Their Eyes were watching God). To sum up, Hurston explains that how one turns into matters more and not how one used to be.

Uphreaval in the society has resulted into numerous revolutions and movements in the world that has made the history. They all started with a purpose, but how it ended decides the consequences of the movement. Therefore, it does not matter how a thing is started. What weighs more is how it ended.

Among a number of these movements that have left a benchmark on history, Feminist movement remains the crucial one. Feminist started as a social and a political movement took

would into a storm as women rose for equal rights for both men and women. Starting from the publication of 'A vindication of the rights of woman' by Mary Wollstonecraft to the equal employment opportunities, equal pay, vote to right and right to hold property Feminist movement turned out to be a success. Even though, it started with a few number of women, it had impacted all women of the world irrespective of boundaries. Therefore, Feminist movement is an example that how things are ended are more important than how they were emerged.

Moreover, Civil Rights Movement of America also signifies that it does not matter how one is born, but how one grows to be. Civil Right Movement in America started with few African-American black people who were tortured, arrested and harassed for raising their voices for equality. However, Civil Rights Movement resulted in Blacks' right to vote, desegregation, labour rights and other basic civil rights. Marlin Luther King Jr. said, "Our lives began to end the day we become silent about things that matter." (Marlin Luther King Jr). To conclude, Civil Rights Movement proved to be fruitful on the basis of how it

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turned out to be.

In the last, French Revolution is one of best examples to explain that the end matters the most. French Revolution, one of the largest upheavals of history started against the inequalities of French society, the corruption of royal officials, and despair owing to widespread economic hardship. However, as the movement was coming to end, millions of people died, displaced, persecuted and corruption was at the peak. Therefore, even though, French Revolution started off as a good movement, it ended on a bad note.

Among a number of famous personalities who took reigns of their lives in hands and changed their lives for good, Boxer Muhammad Ali remains the crucial one. From being a poor discriminated black boy belonging to the segregated South, Muhammad Ali turned to become one of the greatest boxers in history, the first fighter to win the world heavyweight championship on three separate occasions. He said, "He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life." (Muhammad Ali) To conclude, Muhammad Ali is one of those examples who reiterated that what one grows to be is more important

than who initially he was.

Second, Cristiano Ronaldo, one of the most celebrated footballers of contemporary era is an essential example of turning the channels of his life. Ronaldo was born in a family delving in the pits of poverty, suffered from school expulsion, worked as a cleaner and dealt with hardship of lives. However, he turned his life in his favour and nourished his passion for football and emerged as one of the talented and exemplary footballers of all time. Thus, Ronaldo sums up as an example to take grains of life and to never let past dictate one's present and future.

Furthermore, Barack Obama, 44<sup>th</sup> president of the United States of America, is an exemplary instance to work hard. Barack, despite having a troubling childhood, turned out to be the most loved, respected and first black president of United States of America. He took America to the greatest heights and was awarded as Nobel Peace Prize for his utmost contributions. In conclusion, Barack Obama sets a precedent for others to change the course of life as he is judged not for his background, but for how he

grew out to be.

Additionally, Steve Jobs, widely considered as a visionary and a genius, is a prime example for someone who overcame his past challenges and led the world into a new era of technology. Steve Jobs faced many challenges in his life from not being wanted by his birth parents, struggling with pancreatic cancer and getting fired from the company he created. Despite these struggles, Steve Jobs returned like a phoenix and transformed the company into a world leader in telecommunication. Jobs said, "Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice." To conclude, Steve Jobs reiterates that one should be perceived on the basis of his choices to become someone.

Last but not the least, Helen Keller set precedent to the world about limitless abilities and chances one can have. Helen Keller was an American author and one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's leading advocate for individuals with disabilities. Despite being blind and deaf, she was the first deaf-blind person to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree and throughout her education, she learnt to speak, leading her to give speeches and

lectures on aspects of her life. To sum up, Helen Keller is one of leading examples for being unstoppable and invincible as everyone remembers her as a person she became and not as a person she initially was.

In conclusion, one should never be judged on the conditions one was born in. Be it poor, rich, white, black, male, female etc. One thing that prevails is the person one becomes during the course of one's life. For that it is decided by one's own will. To emphasize this, philosophical ideas reinstate that one should not let prevalent norms and values belittle his sense of individuality. Such ideas include Transcendentalism by Emerson, Nietzsche's "God is Dead" and Existentialism by Sartre. Literary depictions of Harper Lee, Dickens, Bronte, Austen, Lucy Montgomery and Hurston further reinforce the idea that man should nurture his individuality and change his circumstances for he would better be judged on the basis of his present and not past. Moreover, renowned movements and revolution place a final hook on the claim that one should always be considered for his choices and not for something



which was out of his hands. In the last famous personalities of Obama, Ronaldo, Muhammad Ali, Steve Jobs and Helen Keller preach the good word that one is always contemplated for his present and not past. Therefore, one should always strive for doing good in his life, for that is in one's control. No one can control the circumstances in which one was born. However, one can absolutely decides in which conditions one wants to die. As Percy B. Shelley rightly said, "If winter comes, can spring be far behind." (Percy Shelley, Ode to the West wind, 1828)

Best of luck

Keep writing