

PROBLEMS OF CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION IN CH.DICKENS WORKS

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ABSTRACT: This article provides a brief summary Charles Dickens' works often highlight the problems of childhood and education in 19th-century England, shedding light on the harsh realities faced by young individuals during that era. Through his vivid portrayals of characters and settings, Dickens brings attention to various issues affecting children and students.

Keywords: Childhood, light, novels, character, play.

INTRODUCTION

Charles Dickens went through hard times as a young man and this reflected upon most if not all of his works. His novels and plays matured as he matured from funny comedy to sometimes depressind drama. As the horrible memories of his past tormented him and constantly depressed him throughout his life, his family life came appart leaving him acting out the part to some of his novels.

An analysis is carried on many children who have various encounters and experienced ups and downs in human world in Dickens' works,by which mainly reveal the problem of children's education.It is pointed out that children's life experiences have a lot to do with their family,the society's attitudes and their education,therefore,entire society should concern with children and their education. Problems of childhood and education in his novels. His novel 'Oliver Twist' published in 1837-9 deals with social problems and is one of the best works of Dickens. The novel tells the story of a little boy born in a workhouse and left an orphan. Brought up under cruel conditions, the hero runs away from the workhouse to London.

FINDINGS

Charles Dickens, the renowned Victorian novelist, is known for his vivid portrayals of social issues and injustices in 19th-century England. Through his works, Dickens shed light on the problems of childhood and education during his time, highlighting the harsh realities faced by many young individuals in a rapidly industrializing society. By examining some of Dickens' most famous novels, such as "Oliver Twist," "David Copperfield," and "Hard Times," we can gain insight into the challenges children and students encountered in the educational system of that era. In "Oliver Twist," Dickens exposes the plight of orphaned and impoverished children who are forced into a life of poverty, crime, and exploitation. Oliver Twist, the titular character, endures harsh treatment at the workhouse and faces abuse at the hands of adults who should protect him. The lack of care and support for vulnerable children in institutions reflects Dickens' criticism of the neglect and mistreatment prevalent in society. Through Oliver's struggles, Dickens highlights the urgent need for reform in child welfare and education.

Similarly, in "David Copperfield," Dickens draws upon his own experiences to depict the challenges faced by children growing up in a society that values conformity and obedience. David's tumultuous journey from childhood to adulthood is marked by hardships, including abuse, neglect, and poverty. The character of Mr. Murdstone represents the oppressive nature of certain educational practices that prioritize discipline over compassion and creativity. Dickens advocates for a more nurturing and inclusive approach to education that fosters individual growth and self-expression.

In "Hard Times," Dickens takes aim at the utilitarian philosophy that dominated educational systems during the Industrial Revolution. The character of Thomas Gradgrind embodies the rigid and mechanistic approach to learning that stifles imagination and emotional development. Children like Louisa and Tom Gradgrind suffer under this system, which values facts and figures over holistic education. Dickens critiques the dehumanizing effects of utilitarianism on young minds and calls for a more balanced and humane approach to education that nurtures both intellect and emotions.

Poverty and Exploitation: Dickens frequently depicts children living in poverty and facing exploitation, as seen in "Oliver Twist" with characters like Oliver himself. These children are often forced to work in harsh conditions, endure abuse, and struggle to survive in a society that neglects their well-being.

Lack of Access to Education: In many of Dickens' novels, children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are denied access to quality education due to financial constraints or social prejudices. Characters like David Copperfield and Pip from "Great Expectations" navigate the challenges of limited educational opportunities, highlighting the barriers faced by disadvantaged youth. **Institutional Cruelty and Neglect:** Dickens criticizes the harsh treatment of children in institutions such as workhouses, orphanages, and boarding schools. Characters like Smike in "Nicholas Nickleby" and the students in "Dotheboys Hall" endure physical abuse, neglect, and dehumanizing conditions, reflecting Dickens' condemnation of institutional cruelty. **Lack of Emotional Support and Nurturing:** Dickens portrays a lack of emotional support and nurturing in educational settings, where strict discipline and rote learning overshadow the emotional needs of students. Characters like Louisa Gradgrind in "Hard Times" struggle with emotional repression and lack of empathy, highlighting the detrimental effects of an education system that neglects emotional development.

CONCLUSION

Through his works, Charles Dickens confronts the problems of childhood and education in Victorian England with compassion and insight. By shining a light on the injustices faced by young individuals, Dickens challenges readers to reflect on the importance of providing care, support, and opportunities for all children to thrive. His enduring legacy as a social reformer continues to inspire discussions on education, social welfare, and the well-being of future generations.

In conclusion, Charles Dickens' portrayal of childhood and education in his works serves as a powerful commentary on the societal issues and injustices prevalent during the Victorian era. By drawing attention to the struggles faced by young individuals, Dickens advocates for social reform, compassion, and equity in education, inspiring readers to reflect on the importance of creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for all children.

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