

# Religious Stigma, Mental Health And Friendship As Themes In Good Omens And Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief

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Emotions are integral part of human kind as in they allow us to share the deepest information in a way that creates an memorable and necessary connection for survival . They help us to understand that how intricately we are connected with each other, and it makes the essence of life memorable and this ideal can be achieved through stories as it create an ambience that can give a deeper understanding of other people's experiences. It not always about what life is sometimes it's about what life should be by the feelings of our surroundings. To live and love is quite important and in this task stories are quite important in this notion , experiences are often useful when they are shared and sometimes to make these experiences worth listening and understanding , stories are very necessary as stories have always been about a segment of our society that endures all the good and bad around itself often they are the medium of conversing when things do not tend to assimilate themselves according to the benefit of the society . People have experiences and often these experiences are what it shapes them into a individual , so as in to express themselves stories are very useful and needy. So as to propagate what is more left of oneself , people often tend to stories a lot and among them they are various variations of it but among them fiction as a genre is very important as it tend to the need of the stories and their way of its meaning. Stories create and maintains the magic of our existence , and so in this magic we need fiction to fix our identities and living of life . So yes we can say that fiction has always been a medium to know about the endearing qualities of the human nature beyond society's pressure for perfection . As we know that fiction has always been a medium to live multiple emotions across the human spectrum . Engaging with fictional storylines that underlines different concepts can stimulate creativity and boost vocabulary. It also helps to develop better self regulation skills. It might enhance the working memory performance, and — under some conditions it also increases the chance of solutions to problems. Fiction is not only about reading fairytales and magic , it's about studying

why these stories that present themselves as different from the set rules of storytelling are tend to be like this and why they don't need to change themselves not matter what . There is a reason why stories like King Arthur has a mysticism to it despite being about war , because at the end it comes down to how perceive the society through the lenses of different spectrum of emotions and all of this can be done through by fiction. And as fiction is our binocular to the society so it also shows the filths and sins of the modern society . Fiction as a genre is so different that it presents what is normally avoided in modern writings for the sake of perfection , as this genre gives birth to people's aspirations and their dreams , each of genre presents something new to the world and the society whether it's fantasy, adventure, horror , thriller , dystopian or young adult. The books written in this genre are developed as a mirror towards our own society such as in hunger games we can see the shortcomings of our government through the lenses of katniss everdeen , president snow represents some of the most dangerous political ideologies of the world that in fact connects to the real life US Presidents but more than this the novel is a critique on our world, our own ideologies as to till what extent we destroy people's lives to achieve peace and development for our own sake , but makes fiction more beautiful that sometimes it says what we can't say freely without the fear of criticism , as in fiction we can find room for each and every identity , themes like body positivity which are often ignored as in something of lesser values of a theme , is also represented in the fiction genre . Stories written in fiction are often regarded something as childish but one should not forget that the story of Harry Potter, Frodo baggins not only gave a chance of hope to the readers but it inspired them to live on their own terms no matter what happens . At the end representation matters not matter it displeases anyone and this aspect is often appreciated by fiction . This thing is so much needed because despite the modern age where democracy rules , there are still issues such as religious stigma, hate towards people dealing with mental issues and different stereotypes and preferences related to what should be the mode of relation between two individuals without concerning the opinion of the concerned individuals. And all of these aspects can be interpreted through the texts Good Omens and Percy Jackson and the lightning thief as both of these texts deals with the elements of how society is such a rigid place that it never truly accepted change through the course of time. So the need is there for fiction as a genre is very much needed in explaining the inhumane aspect of the society through the use of story telling and satire .

## The influences of religious fundamentalism and prejudice against different individuals

Different ideas and theories are often disregarded because the society tends to accumulate to the need of people for its very existence in their own twisted definition and as a result there is still separationists people and their ideologies. As people often tend to ignore what they cannot understand as what they cannot understand either they banish it or refuse to acknowledge it completely but diminishing something is done through a hard way as in the text *Good Omens* written by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett walks into the area of biblical story telling but with a twist as it deals with how people in power often changes the perspectives of stories according to their own will to suit their own plans, we get to know through the characters of Aziraphale and Crowley the two supernatural deities given the responsibility of ensuring the faith of Adam and Eve according to the whims and wishes of heaven and hell, as we see that in the starts even Crowley despite being demon questions Aziraphale that whether it was necessary to punish Adam and Eve for eating the forbidden fruit as they literally didn't have any idea on to how and what is good and evil and whether what's the basic difference between the two, in response to which Aziraphale replies that it's all the part of the ineffable plan and it's best not to question which in turns draws that what kind of authority is heaven despite belonging to the good side, as they don't nurture and accepts questions. The novel also dwells on the aspect of how being different and not agreeing to the typical religious theories lead oneself to bring facing stigma as we can see through Agnes nutter as we see that how she suffered due to possessing power of prophecies all of this due to the insolence of the male counterparts that never accepted the fact that even a women can possess prophetic power, with the novel also tangle itself with various aspects of the social issue and not only social issue it also deals with how the aspects of mental health, dynamic of human relationships are stigmatised to such a extent that it makes quite difficult for the people to survive happily and contended, *Good Omens* as a novel questions the very aspects of the order of the society that's why the things are in the way that they are as such it's satire on the workings of the society that how we the modern individuals despite being civilized are the most corrupt and dishonest part of the society. The novel not only directs the chaos of our society but it also further showcases the typical moralistic debates of our society as the novel also throws light on the importance of parents in the early stages of a child as a nurturer and caregivers. But the novel also brings out the difficult attitude of the society towards individuals that are different in any sense such as believers of different faith. As we can see that how anathema device is a mirror



for us to look that how the society and it's typical traditional norms are destroying the very spirit of positive ideas and notions . The novel speaks volume on how parents hardly ever accept any mistakes in upbringing a child . Mental health also plays a very important role in the story of the novel as it talks about that how issues like ADHD , depression are still a taboo for people . And all of these are presented through the use of humor and Absurdity despite the fact that *Good Omens* is about the possible end of the World, it's nevertheless a humorous novel . This is by design—in the novel 's supplemental Materials, the author Neil Gaiman says that while he and coauthor Terry Pratchett were writing Good The main objective was to make the other one laugh.” By writing such a funny story about death and the end of the world, Gaiman and Pratchett show that it's possible to find humor in every situation, and to use to the present the issues of modern society . And for that matter, life is richer and more enjoyable when one takes this outlook. But once again the society should not forget

The same aspect is followed by *Percy Jackson and the lightning thief* written by Rick Riordan as the novel draws the light on many taboo subject of the society through the aspect of a hero's journey to success as we can see that how Percy Jackson the main character of the novel presents the idea of how meek and bully the society is to kids that are totally different from others and have different mental condition such as ADHD and even though there is enough awareness but still the society refuses to acknowledge it and just ignored and oppress people like Percy and in it the society also sees that why it's not typical for the individual to not adapt the aspect of male ego , other than this we can see that how religious stigma is too entwined with these issues as in how people with different religious ideologies and beliefs are forced to leave all their beliefs behind for the sake of a status in the society, and than further the novel dwells on to the fact that it's not necessary or even important to have true human connection and as all that is necessary is to have a way with the personal motives and intentions and that's all as the modern world doesn't appreciate human emotions and one should never except it from anyone even not from a god. And these bold moves and takes is what makes these texts special as because they embody fiction as a way to present themselves more than just story about gods or heroes , one should understand that it's necessary to propagate and support suppressed voices in a way that is not ignored nor forgotten as the same approach is also done by non fiction books , but the problem is that often these voices covered by non fiction tend to approach and fulfill the academic values and people do not consider them in real

life, but with books of fiction genre it's easy to appeal more audiences irrespective of their age, which in turn helps to garner support for suppressed voices. And to further understand the issues mentioned we can include and study texts like *Six of Crows* as this text heavily dwells on the issue of religious stigma, mental health and the need for a true human connection. The issue of religious stigma can be understood through these that how the text indulges in the concept of religious corruption and human trafficking in the name for the good of the society, not only it does talk about this it also throws on the issues of parenting and mental health through characters such as Wylan van Eck and Jesper Fahey.

### **The Secondary texts playing an important part in the essence of the primary texts**

*Six of Crows* is a text that not only deals with that how good is a society for oneself it talks about the darkest part of what should not be in the society that how it's a responsibility for adults to fulfill their duties towards the kids as in that they cannot ignore their parental duties no matter what, and further the text is a primal example that often the modern society is no place for emotions or different individuals, only one thing survives which money and power. Other than the usual aspect of following the issues of religious stigma, mental health and friendship the text also dives into the topic of LGBTQ rights that how the community is shunned in the society, that is ready to accept every relationship but not a relationship that are genuinely formed on love and how the people belonging from this community are often shunned and oppressed for being what they are. We can understand the modern dynamics of the society towards autistic kids, trans kids, bisexual kids through the characters of Wylan van Eck and Jesper Fahey as in these two characters bring out the traumatic experiences of what teens and kids belonging to LGBTQ have faced over the course of time and with this it also talks about the issues of the suppression of women in each and every field. The same thing can be observed in *Fire and Blood* the text that deals with the issues of how the patriarchal system deals with the topic that how communities are destroyed on the basis of their religious ideologies and beliefs just because they are not a majority in the society and this struggle became way dangerous when the ruling government criminalised any community that follows different religions which in turn also leads to the issue of communal violence, with this the text just like the previous text mentioned holds the society and their adults for the lack of knowledge regarding mental health and how not just every relationship has to come with benefits. To further the aspect of delusional is modern society

towards the aspects of what being human actually is often represented in Dune as we see that the other three texts represents dogmas , mental health and selfish relationship the same is explored in this but what with more sub themes such as the indirect relationship being religious stigma and political corruption that often feuds on the whims and wishes of the upper class of the society. As Dune despite being science-fiction addressed the issues of religion. Although many science-fiction authors have considered religion an outdated institution that would eventually lose its direct control over society and has no true control over the destiny of man . And others assumed that the separation of church and state would only widen in the future. Frank Herbert had a different notion and conception of the future. As Dune's story telling employs a feudal government system that includes dukes and barons and in which religion has a very strong presence in everyday life and politics and at times it also decided the fate of humanity through their by juggling their preferences according to the typical say of the religion With this Religion's most obvious presence in Dune is also presented through Bene Gesserit. The Bene Gesserit are familiar with numerous religious texts, from the Orange Catholic Bible to more cryptic texts such as the Great Mysteries. These texts play a significant role in defining the Bene Gesserit conception of the world. The Missionaria Protectiva reveals that the Bene Gesserit frequently exploit religion to protect their own members. The Bene Gesserit use the Missionaria Protectiva to spread contrived legends and prophecies to developing worlds. Bene Gesserit can exploit these legends to earn the respect of the native inhabitants, who believe in the contrived legends. But one should remember that these groups and organizations also exploited the faith and belief of the native people according to their needs . The other Important presence of religion in Dune involves control of the Fremmen. The character of Kynes's father is the first person to exploit religion as a method of rallying the Fremmen to his cause—turning Arrakis from a desert planet to a lush, green world. Kynes and his father hope to bring paradise back to Arrakis through religion. Although Kynes wants to bring nature to Arrakis by making it a lush, green planet, his endeavor is contrary to nature because Arrakis is a naturally dry planet.

Dune also present Religion as an addictive source to survive as it represent a source of comfort and power throughout the novel. As we can see this through that how Paul pursues the same goals as Kynes, but he uses his religious power over the Fremmen as their messiah to gain control of the entire Imperium. Paul possesses mystical abilities that go above and beyond a simple heightened awareness or intelligence, but his clever



exploitation of religion is his most powerful advantage. Paul's adept manipulation of religion and the calculated use of legends contrived by the Bene Gesserit allow him to rise to the position of Emperor. With this aspect Dune as a novel also dives in to the issues of mental health and the psychological battles that one must go through with it, the novel also indirectly teaches about how anxiety isn't something that should be ignored as it should be treated with help and love for the person that is facing and how with also will power it can be defeated as this notion is also presented in the quote :- "I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration. I will face my fear. I will permit it to pass over me and through me. And when it has gone past, I will turn the inner eye to see its path. Where the fear has gone there will be nothing. Only I will remain." . Other than this Dune as a text also deals with the intricate balance of human relationships of every type such as friendship and love and it also includes with how this is the question of whether Paul is strong enough to break free of the same structures that trapped and murdered his father. Dune positions humanity itself as the only thing strong enough to break these systems of oppression. That's why it's important that Paul has to assert his humanity so early in the film. The real question is whether Paul can hold on to that humanity, with all the other forces at work around him and all the traps aligned against him. At its core, Dune is a cautionary tale about what happens when those in power presume themselves to be more than human, as much as what happens when they assume others are less. Other than this the Dune as a text also focuses on the individuality of women so as to properly analyze the women in Dune—specifically the members of the Bene Gesserit Sisterhood—we need to recognize the complexity of their characterization and activities within the larger context of the world and its politics. As Many though not all, of their roles fall within the boundaries of those traditionally held by women. The main female character, Lady Jessica, for example, is a concubine, mother, advisor, and religious leader. This makes sense as such roles fit within the feudal, medieval-style world that Herbert creates. It is not a reason to dismiss Dune's female characters as weak, inferior, or passive, as some critics have done. Herbert makes the Bene Gesserit a believable part of his world while showing how its members exert agency in the face of plausible limitations and tensions in life. The women of the Bene Gesserit are active, influential, and powerful, even if not in the ways we might expect. Literature represents both good and bad parts and values of the society. In reflecting the bad values it give us as a chance to rectify and solve the issues. In reflection of good values in the society it makes us to cherish and emulate them. Often as reflection, literature presents a picture of what people

think, say and do in the society. But not always this welcomed by the civilised members of the society as it's often disregarded and suppressed through various ways as if it's going way different from the stereotypical approach regarding the issues of the society as people tend to get quite uncomfortable regarding the topics of discussion that effects their power and prestige , as they believe that it will destroy the very structure of the society and the power hierarchy although the only that gets destroyed is their world of pretty glass , in history there are powerful examples of how important pieces of literature were destroyed due to the same reason as in authorities tend to ignore literature pieces that criticise them openly , for examples nazi government reaction towards different pieces of literature . So as to avoid all these issues fiction as a medium is very helpful as because through this we can present our stories in a way that will tender to the true idea and spirit . Literature and art are often two such medium that speaks when no one is able to do , and so often these types of texts mentioned above are necessary for oneself, because they are the echo of what heart desires , as heart always wants peace and love no matter what , as in that Percy ever wanted and it's also what Crowley and Kaz too wanted . One thing that is even more common among all of the primary and secondary texts is that supernaturalism and politics often go hand in hand despite the different notion of issues and problems as in it to explain that how people are tend to be so non cooperative towards the needed change around them.

### **Conclusion.**

We can conclude that fiction is a medium that often is a guiding light when society refuses acknowledge the truth and try to destroy it's existence , so as to protect the tender core of stability that often disregards the one that are not in the power structure . As the same is further explained through the Good Omens and Percy Jackson and the lightning thief as both of these texts deal with the settings of mythology but with a twist of modernity as the stories of these texts tend to present the pristine view of how the modern society works and how brutal it is and not only it's brutal but it's also barbaric in its nature for different individuals and ideologies. The texts wonderfully has woven themselves into the power of fictional storytelling so as into explain what it couldn't be explained through other means . But in this aspect the other texts that fulfill the medium of fiction completely are :- six of crows , fire and blood and Dune because of these all through belonging to different sub genre of fiction have one thing in common that they prove that themes such as religious stigma, mental health and friendship with feminism and LGBTQ aspects is almost present in every other part of the modern society but it



hardly gets true recognition. And at last further we can say that fiction as a medium concentrates on the shortcomings of the society as it presents it as in the form of a pristine glass. Often the people and especially the adults of the society tend to ignore the undealt feelings and sentiments of children and young adults on the pretext of that it was not their fault and all of these notions are present in the mentioned primary and secondary texts, so we can see the need for different genres of fiction is necessary as always because it becomes a medium for voice. Through by considering it as we can say that the selection of the texts for the paper has contributed to the analysis of the society through a different perspective. The texts mentioned above all represent the elements of moral degradation that has increased so much, that people are ready to ignore it to all extent and by all means and methods possible, these texts are representation of a diluted reality and peace that often the modern society accepts in the name of peace and security. With this the texts also help us to understand the intimacy of a reader's relationship with a fictional narrator's interior dialogue as a unique process which in turn changes the inner lives of oppressed souls and tormented people. Fiction and imaginative techniques of writing help us to uplift our souls in every sense. And we can also see that how fiction help us to develop the qualities that are good for us in every way as through fiction we can acquire the essence of honesty, modesty and bravery. The fictional characters are also a great source of information as we can see that how Katniss Everdeen, Annabeth Chase are a source of great inspiration around the world.

At last fictional stories are the medium of the survival of the human heart and soul.

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